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FRC denies report of split

AMMAN (J.T.) — The hardline Fatah Revolutionary Council (FRC) led by Abu Nidal Wednesday denied that there was a split in its ranks in Baghdad. An FRC statement said since the Iraqi authorities closed the movement's offices and camps in Iraq in 1983, the movement did not have any "declared" presence in Iraq. The Iraqi authorities only allow an envoy from the movement to stay in Iraq to follow up matters related to "martyr's families." The group said news about an FRC split aims to "target the movement and fall within the context of organized campaigns against it by the Zionist-crusader forces and the leadership of the PLO's current executive committee."

Afghan cabinet crisis meeting imminent

KABUL (AFP) — A meeting between Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani and Prime Minister-designate Gulbuddin Hekmatyar has been scheduled for this week to solve the cabinet crisis, the presidential spokesman announced Wednesday. "There will be a meeting of leaders in one to two days," Abdul Aziz Morad said, adding that the majority of the nine Mujahideen faction heads would attend. "The main items on the agenda will be the establishment of the cabinet and to seek more guarantees for the current ceasefire," the presidential press spokesman said.

Israelis selling arms to Bosnia Muslims

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel Television reported Tuesday that Israeli arms merchants were selling light arms and ammunition to Muslims in Bosnia. It said the first shipment of over three tonnes had already been sent. The "tributed report stressed that the deals were not official, but rather the initiative of private arms merchants. According to Israeli law, weapon sales from Israel must be accompanied by an "end user" certificate issued by the government to monitor who uses the arms.

4 hanged in Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Four people convicted of armed robbery were hanged Tuesday in Sirjan, south-east Iran, the newspaper Kayhan reported Wednesday. The four were sentenced to death in November but had appealed the decision to the supreme court. They were part of a 10-member gang which had been involved in armed robbery and kidnapping in the cities of Sirjan, Rafsanjan, and Anar in Kerman province southeast Iran. Three other members of the gang were sentenced to 15 years in jail each. The fate of the others was unknown. Armed robbery is a crime punishable by death in Iran.

40 bodies found in Waco cult compound

WASHINGTON (AFP) — About 40 bodies have been found in the ruins of the Texas cult compound where 86 people are believed to have died after a 51-day standoff with authorities that ended in a blaze, officials said Wednesday. The bodies seen in and around the compound include the remains of 10 women and children and three of the bodies appear to have been shot, said Carl Stern, a Justice Department spokesman in Washington. Two of the three people believed to have been shot were found at the edge of the compound, Mr. Stern said, adding that it was not clear whether they were victims of suicide or homicide (see page 8).

Armenian leader upbeat after Azeri talks

ANKARA (AFP) — The presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia, Abulfaz Elchibey and Levon Ter-Petrosian, met here Wednesday for their first talks on the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and the Armenian leader said afterwards he was "very satisfied" with the discussion. "It was our first meeting with Mr. Elchibey and I can say that I am very satisfied with our encounter," he told journalists after the 30-minute meeting at the Grand Hotel here. Mr. Elchibey made no immediate comment after Wednesday's talks.

Arabs to return to peace talks April 27

Arafat and Sharaa say they expect Washington to fulfil its pledges

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — The Arabs agreed Wednesday to resume Middle East peace talks next week in Washington, ending a four-month break triggered by the expulsion of 400 Palestinians to South Lebanon.

Although Israel had refused a demand to repatriate the expelled before the talks resume, the Arabs said they expected some Israeli concessions in exchange for their return to the negotiations.

In Washington, Secretary of State Warren Christopher said the ninth round of talks would begin Tuesday. He called the Arab decision "a courageous one" and urged improved human rights conditions for Palestinians living in the Israeli-occupied territories (see separate story).

"The Arabs, to give another chance for efforts to reach a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East ... propose April 27 for the resumption of negotiations" in Washington, said Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al-Sharaa.

He read out a final document after six days of consultations between Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Palestinians, the four Arab parties to the Washington talks, which were originally due to resume Tuesday.

In the occupied Gaza Strip, meanwhile, Israeli troops shot dead two Palestinians and wounded 56 others in some of the worst clashes for weeks, according to Palestinian sources (see story below).

Jordan names delegation

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government Wednesday named the Kingdom's delegation to the Arab-Israeli bilateral peace talks which are due to resume in Washington on April 27. The delegation will be led by Dr. Abdul Salam Al Majali, and will include Dr. Jawad Al Anani, former minister, Dr. Faysal Tarawneh, Jordan's ambassador to the United States, Mr. Hussein Hammami, Foreign Ministry secretary-general, Dr. Munther Haddadin, former head of the Jordan Valley Authority, Dr. Mohammad Bani Hani, former head of the Jordan Valley Authority, Dr. Shaker Arabiyat, Jordan's ambassador to Bahrain, Mr. Nayef Al Qadi and Mr. Awn Khasawneh, ambassadors at the Foreign Ministry, Mr. Abdul Ilah al Kurdi from the Royal Court, Dr. Mousa Breizat from the Royal Court, Dr. Marwan Muasher, head of the Jordan Information Bureau in Washington, an Armed Forces official, and Dr. Lina Touqan, a Royal Court official who holds a doctorate degree in law.

Mr. Sharaa urged the implementation of "all U.N. Security Council resolutions," notably its land-for-peace calls and demand for the return of the expellees. He also called for an Israeli pledge to halt its policy of expulsions and for the key sponsor of the peace initiative, Washington, to abide by its commitments and play the role of a full partner.

"The ministers stress the need to implement all the commitments and assurances provided by the U.S. administration," Mr. Sharaa said, adding the Arabs sought "substantial and concrete progress within a reasonable period of time."

The decision to return to the bargaining table was issued jointly by the foreign ministers of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt and leaders of the Palesti-

occupied territories to bar Palestinian workers from travelling to Israel for their jobs.

Mr. Sharaa read a communiqué which said: "Stemming from the Arab parties' keen interest to give a new opportunity for efforts aimed at establishing a just and comprehensive peace and in light of the U.S. commitment to play the role of full partner ... the Arab ministers propose to the co-sponsors to start the ninth session on April 27, 1993."

"We will inform the United States in the coming hours of our agreement," said the official, who refused to be named. "Israel has always been ready to negotiate," he added.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin voiced hopes earlier Wednesday that Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Palestinians would now decide to hold a ninth round of talks, which had first been scheduled to start on Tuesday, April 20.

Israeli Radio reported that Mr. Rabin said the Arab decision was not linked to Israeli "concessions." He said he hoped the Arabs "will understand that this is the extraordinary opportunity that cannot be passed up."

Mr. Rabin earlier congratulated U.S. President Bill Clinton for "not giving in to Arab pressure" and for having "stuck to his guns."

Israelis should not be fooled, he added. "If the Arabs agree to return to the negotiations, it will be because of the United States not because of us or gestures they expect from us."

Israel says it is ready

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel will agree to attend Middle East peace talks next Tuesday, a date proposed by the Arabs for resuming the negotiations after a four-month break, a senior official said Wednesday.

"We will inform the United States in the coming hours of our agreement," said the official, who refused to be named. "Israel has always been ready to negotiate," he added.

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U.S. announces talks, but yields nothing else

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Middle East peace talks will resume here on April 27 after a four-month break, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher announced Wednesday after the Arabs said they had received U.S. guarantees.

Mr. Christopher said: "It has been almost five months since the last round of talks. Too much time has been lost, but there was now a chance to pick up from where the talks left off in December."

He said he was notified of the Arab decision by Faisal Husseini, identifying him as "the head of the (Palestinian) delegation." The Arab East Jerusalem resident heads a steering committee and has been barred from the negotiating table because Israel wanted to avoid any negotiations over Jerusalem.

The secretary of state reaffirmed Washington's attachment to U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, which he said called for a land-for-peace settlement, respect for the political rights of the Palestinians and security for all.

Mr. Christopher, urged improved human rights conditions for the Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories and said the negotiations "can see occupation

give way to self-government." He also voiced Washington's "dismay by the killings in the occupied territories and Israel, where dozens of people died last month in an upsurge of violence."

He said the Palestinians spoke "eloquently" of human rights in the occupied territories and that their decision to return to the talks "was a difficult one."

"They have agreed to deal with the causes and not the symptoms" (of violence).

The new sessions at the State Department in Washington will be the first talks since President Bill Clinton was elected.

Mr. Christopher called the decision to resume the talks "a courageous one" for the Palestinians to take. And he said "these negotiations can see occupation give way to self-government."

Mr. Christopher, asked by a reporter if his statement was intended to hold out the promise of statehood to the Palestinians, replied, "no change is intended in that, at all."

Both the United States and Israel have declared their opposition to a Palestinian state. The current negotiations are supposed to provide limited self-rule for the Palestinians.

Gulf crisis cost Arabs \$676 billion

ABU DHABI (R) — Arab countries lost \$676 billion as a result of the 1990/91 Gulf crisis and war, equivalent to 18 months' loss of their total gross national product (GNP), according to latest figures from the Arab World's principal monetary agency.

The figures, which equalled one and half-times the value of total U.S. investments abroad, were released Wednesday by the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) in an annual report on Arab economies prepared with two other major Arab financial institutions.

The report gives the first complete picture of the extent of the economic damage from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, showing similar losses for the two principal Arab antagonists.

Iraq, which triggered the crisis with its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, sustained economic losses of \$237 billion while the victim, Kuwait, had losses of \$340 billion. For the 600,000 Kuwaitis, this was more than 10 times their country's GNP for the last pre-crisis year, when it stood at \$23 billion.

Kuwait had to liquidate about two-thirds of its \$100 billion "fund for future generations," mainly invested abroad over 25 years, to help pay for the war and post-war reconstruction.

For Iraq, which has almost 20 million people, the cost was almost four times its 1989 GNP total of \$64 billion. The two states accounted for 70 per cent of total costs of the crisis for the nations of the 21-member Arab League.

(Continued on page 5)

Jordan urges tough action in Bosnia

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan has urged the U.N. Security Council to adopt a new resolution lifting the arms embargo on Bosnia-Herzegovina so that Muslims under Serbian attack there could procure arms to defend themselves and issuing a fresh warning to Serbian forces to implement a predetermined ceasefire or face further U.N. action.

The Jordanian call came during a Security Council debate Tuesday on the conflict in the former Yugoslavia when the Kingdom's permanent delegate to the U.N., Adnan Abu Odeh, addressed the council.

According to a transcript of the council proceedings made available to the Jordan Times, Mr. Abu Odeh denounced "the brutal Serbian aggression" on Bosnian Muslims and criticised the U.N. for not adopting swift action to end the plight of the Muslims under attack.

Mr. Abu Odeh paid tribute to the efforts of the international peace keeping forces for the humanitarian task they were performing under very difficult conditions, as well as to the non-governmental relief organisations for their persistence in providing assistance to the afflicted in that crazy and ugly war.

The Serbian aggression constituted an open and continuous challenge to the United Nations Charter, he said. It was an aggression carried out by criminals who continued to deny not only the humanity of their victims but their own humanity as well. "Is he a human being who systematically rapes women collectively and continues to do?" he asked.

It was no less painful, sad and shocking that those acts were being committed in the heart of Europe by a European people, he said. "Where are the human rights and where are the ideals and principles which decorate the Western discourse?" he asked.

"Indeed, where is the United Nations?" If the Serbs challenged and violated the Charter by continuing their aggression against Muslims, the United Nations itself would violate the Charter if it failed to use its powers provided for in the Charter to stop that aggression, unless there were two United Nations: "One uses its powers and the other does not."

If that was the case, he went on, what would happen to international peace and security? "We are confused," he said. Was the international community to hope that aggression would be stopped and deterred only if the conflict occurred in a country where the

shells landed for the first time in two weeks.

In Belgrade, Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic refused to meet with European Community mediator Lord Owen, saying he had "nothing to discuss with a man who wants to shoot at us."

In central Bosnia, where fighting between formerly allied Muslims and Croats raged for a sixth day, Colonel Bob Stewart, a commander of British peacekeepers on U.N. duty, said his troops would be scarred for life by the atrocities they had witnessed.

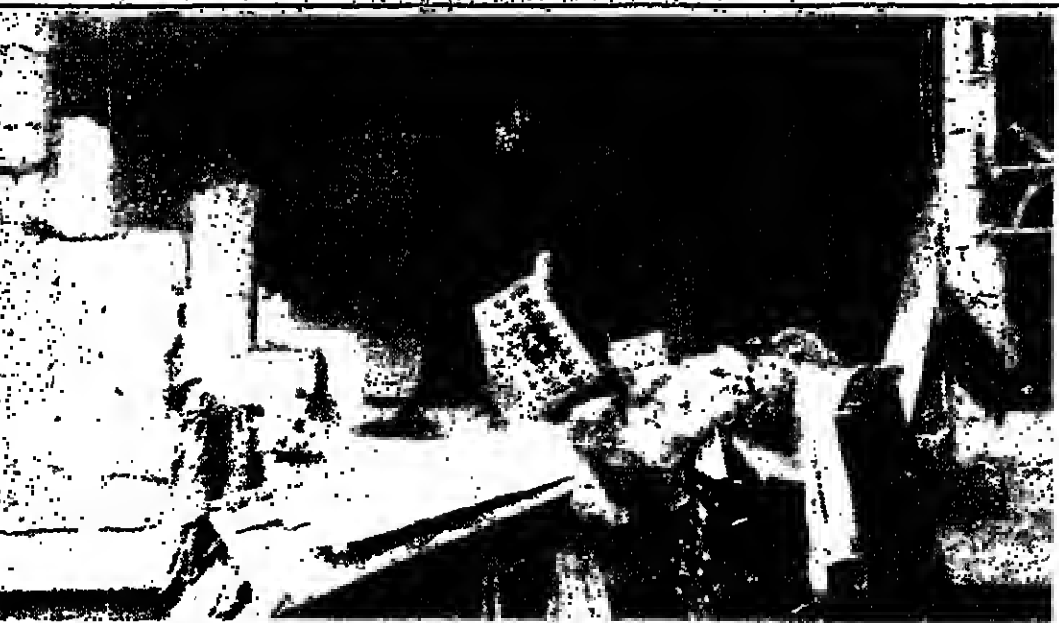
"They've seen children held in the arms of their mothers and shot," he told British radio.

Cedric Thornberry, the no. 2 U.N. official in former Yugoslavia, said executions and massacres had been committed by both sides.

U.N. officials said 10 trucks unloaded aid in Srebrenica and were returning to Belgrade. At least 18 wounded Muslim soldiers were airlifted out to the north-eastern city of Tuzla, where Serb

shells landed for the first time in two weeks.

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A resident of Khan Yunis camp in the occupied Gaza Strip looks for his belongings in the ruins of his house which was demolished by the Israeli army Tuesday (AFP photo)

Israeli soldiers kill two and wound 56 in clashes

OCCUPIED GAZA STRIP (Agencies) — Israeli troops shot dead a Palestinian and wounded six others in a mosque Wednesday here, raising the toll to two dead and 56 wounded in a day of heavy clashes on the Strip, Palestinian sources said.

Wael Saeed, 17, was hit by several bullets in the chest inside a mosque in the Sheikh Radwan neighbourhood of Gaza City,

where several Palestinian demonstrators had fled to escape soldiers. The clashes, the worst for several weeks to the Strip, broke out as human rights groups urged the Israeli government to end a blockade of the West Bank and Gaza Strip imposed late last month.

Wednesday's violence erupted at the Nusseirat refugee camp

after the army set up new observation posts atop Arab homes, Palestinian sources said. Mohammad Abu Shawish, 20 was killed and 30 other Palestinians were wounded in ensuing clashes with the soldiers.

Another three Palestinians were shot in the Tuffah area of Gaza, where soldiers destroyed

(Continued on page 5)

Abdul Shafi 'surprised,' but will obey decision

AMMAN (J.T.) — Chief Palestinian negotiator Haidar Abdul Shafi said Wednesday his delegation was surprised by the Arab decision Wednesday to resume talks with Israel because the Jewish state had not met their demands.

"We were surprised by the decision taken in Damascus because our recommendation to our political leadership was to suspend participation in the ninth round until Israel responded to our requests," Mr. Abdul Shafi said.

In an interview with Jordan Television, Mr. Abdul Shafi said: "As these requests have not been complied with, that was the source of surprise."

"But we understand our political leadership was concerned with the unity of the Arab and the Palestinian ranks and therefore our decision is to comply with our

leadership's decision," he added. He said that he expected Israel to take back 101 of the expellees and a number of other Palestinians expelled from the occupied territories since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war before the talks resume next week.

"We also hope to talk to the Israelis into rescheduling a large number of the 415 expellees in a time not exceeding June," he added.

Another senior Palestinian peace negotiator said later Tuesday that he and others may quit the team if the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) backs an immediate return to the bargaining table.

"I have told the (PLO) chairman that these obstacles remain and if in one way or another you order us to go it is not a question

(Continued on page 5)

Palestinian leader critical of decision

By Odeh Odeh

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A prominent Palestinian leader has strongly criticised the Palestinian decision to participate in the ninth round of the bilateral peace talks with Israel and predicted that it would deepen divisions inside the Palestinian camp and reflect negatively on the course of the five-year-old intifada inside the occupied territories.

"The Palestinian decision to go back to Washington was actually taken as far back as Sunday at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation

(Continued on page 5)

JSCF SUPER CHARITY BINGO PARTY

Jordan Save the Children Fund is inviting you to a "Charity Bingo Party" at the Royal Automobile Club of Jordan, on Thursday, April 22, 1993 at 8:00 p.m.

All proceeds will go to the benefit of the charity campaign. For more information, please call tel.: 670241

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Home News

40 years after its establishment the Jordanian Communist Party holds first legal congress

By Sausan Ghosheh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Jordanian Communist Party (JCP) began its first, national, legal congress Wednesday, more than forty years after the establishment of the party.

"We are living in the time of the great earthquake... after the fall of the socialist bloc the communist parties have come under tremendous attack... but Jordan has opened its doors wide to Communists," said Emily Naffaa, JCP politburo member, in her opening speech.

JCP General Secretary Yacoub Zayadin presented the political report of the party at the opening session of the three-day congress, held at the Royal Cultural Centre.

He reviewed the history of the JCP stressing the need for democracy and pluralism.

Dr. Zayadin said the absence of democracy in the past has "hindered the development process in Jordan."

"Democracy needs to be part of our everyday life... we live in a period of national and democratic development," he added.

Dr. Zayadin said the situation has never been worse for Arabs and stated that the "future of Arabs is linked to democracy."

He also spoke of the dilemma the JCP faced over the "identity of the party after the collapse of Communism in eastern Europe."

But, Dr. Zayadin reassured the attendees that the JCP was able to overcome this dilemma and to "protect its existence" and its ideas.

He stressed that the JCP still adheres to the Marxist-Leninist ideology and believes that "capitalism can never be an alternative to socialism because it is unable to guarantee social justice."

In his speech, Dr. Zayadin mentioned that the JCP's goals

are protecting the political and social independence of Jordan; human development; protecting women's rights, strengthening democracy and respecting human rights; protecting the environment; and supporting the Palestinian question.

At the end of his speech, Dr. Zayadin called on the third world workers and progressives to "unite in order to face the imperial powers that are exploiting them."

Over a thousand congress delegates, guests and members of 22 Arab and foreign delegations gathered at the opening session, which took on a festive mood.

Members of different political parties from nine Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, were represented at the conference, as well as representatives from communists and socialist parties from Korea, Cuba, Cyprus and Greece.

The theme of democracy and adherence to socialism was also central in other speeches at the session.

"Despite the fall of the Soviet Union, our party insists that there is no alternative to the Marxist-Leninist philosophy," said Giorgio Antonio, the Cuban ambassador to Jordan, who received a rousing applause.

North Korean Ambassador Gong Cha said "socialism is still the goal of all the progressive parties... nothing can stand in the face of justice."

A representative of the United Progressive National Alliance in Egypt, Abdul Halim Al Sheikh, delivered a speech on behalf of the Arab National Liberation Movement, saying that "holding a conference like this in Jordan is a victory for democracy, not just in Jordan, but in the Arab World as a whole."

He added that there should be a move to "protect democracy from intellectual and material terrorism."

The latter theme was supported by George Hawi, a member of the Lebanese Communist Party, who emphasised that we are in a period that needs national unity and dialogue.

"Let the communists, nationalists and Islamists and the Arab World unite to face the external powers who want to destroy them... let democracy decide which ideology is the correct one, not terrorism and dictatorship," he stressed.

Member of the Syrian Communist Party Yusef Faisal delivered a speech on behalf of the Arab communist parties calling for unity and democracy among the Arabs to face the "imperial" threat.

"The United States," he explained, "is supporting conservative movements and is utilizing Israel, Turkey and to some extent Egypt to control the area."

Telegrams sent by delegates, who were unable to attend, such as the Kuwaiti Democratic Forum and the American Communist Party, were either read or distributed at the opening session.

In the next three days, the JCP will be discussing their political programme, their charter and the structure of the party.

Member of the JCP Laila Naffaa said the JCP expects that the congress will pave the way for more democratisation in the party.

She said that for the first time, the JCP will elect its central committee without interference from the leaders of the party.

Ms. Naffaa added that there will be new faces in the central committee and the politburo, but she said, the JCP members insist on keeping Dr. Zayadin as the general secretary.

In addition, Ms. Naffaa is anticipating a shift in the JCP's stand on religion, Arab culture and literature.

17-member group arrested for thefts

AMMAN (Petra) — A group of 17 people have been apprehended and charged with several robberies and car thefts, in the Amman area, Wednesday.

Department Director Brigadier Abdullah Al Hababbeh, who made the announcement, said that over the past few months, police stations have repeatedly received complaints from the public about burglaries and car thefts and subsequent police investigations led to the arrest of the group.

Acting on information that members of the group had been allegedly renting furnished flats for short period and then abandoning them, the police said they were able to determine that these tenants would leave the rented homes once their mission had been carried out.

The suspected group used to steal electrical appliances, jewelry and cash from homes which they entered by using duplicates of various types of keys, in addition to stealing cars parked in the residential area of Amman, said Brig. Hababbeh.

The group members used to drive the stolen cars to remote areas, where they dismantled them and sold off their parts, the police director said.

He said the police have now retrieved a large amount of the stolen items and have been in contact with the owners to identify and retrieve them.

Brig. Hababbeh appealed to landlords to refrain from letting homes to people without making sure of their identities and the purpose of renting.

Mbaideen calls for protecting pan-Arab interests

CAIRO (Petra) — Jordan Wednesday urged Arab countries to follow up the successful meeting of their labour ministers in Amman two weeks ago, with another success through an Arab justice ministers meeting in Cairo.

Voicing Jordan's call Justice Minister Yusef Mbaideen said the Arab ministers of justice are holding meetings amid crucial developments in the region and against a backdrop of continued inter-Arab differences that should end for the sake of safeguarding pan-Arab interests.

Addressing the opening session at the conference Mr. Mbaideen said the time has come for the Arab Nation to achieve a reunion by removing all elements that still mar their relations.

The Arab ministers of labour, he said, have carried out their task and shouldered their responsibilities towards their nation, and it is hoped that the justice ministers would follow suit and do their share towards serving their nation.

Businessmen, UNRWA to review idea to reduce agency's deficit

By Ella Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — In a bid to help the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to reduce the deficit in its 1993 fiscal budget, the Department of Palestinian Affairs at the Foreign Ministry will host a meeting today by UNRWA officials and representatives of Jordanian businessmen to discuss the prospect of purchasing the agency's needs from the local Jordanian markets.

Should an agreement get through, UNRWA would be saving a great deal of funds that would have been spent on goods bought for the refugees living in Jordan from other countries, said a department official.

Such a move and a planned

transfer of some of the agency's departments from its Vienna headquarters to Amman this summer would be helpful to UNRWA and make a contribution to the agency's efforts to cut expenses, said the agency official.

A team from the Vienna headquarters, led by Abdul Ghan Khalil, director of management and planning, has arrived in Amman for the Thursday talks with representatives of the Ministries of Industry and Trade and Supply, in addition to representatives of the Amman Chambers of Industry and Trade and the department's director Adel Ihsaid.

According to UNRWA Director in Jordan Dennis Brown, "The participants will have an in-depth evaluation of UNRWA's procurement programme in the agency's areas of operation. The talks aim at exploring the possibility of UNRWA depending more on the local manufacturing plants and suppliers to provide the agency with its requirements for materials and supplies," Mr. Brown added.

UNRWA plans to move its head offices in charge of education and finance to Amman as of July.

The move was seen as part of the agency's endeavours to reduce the margin of deficit in its budget.

On April 11, UNRWA said it would start levying token charges for health services and part of education services it currently offers to the refugees in Jordan as of July this year.

Mr. Brown said then, that the move was aimed at addressing the estimated \$28.5 million deficit in the agency's \$300 million budget for this year.

Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber voiced Jordan's rejection of any move on the part of the agency to reduce services to the refugees in the country.

The agency's measures and its delay in meeting the demands of its employees for pay increases prompted the staff to stage a one-day strike last Wednesday.

Mr. Brown said the strike forced the closure of 201 schools attended by more than 152,000 Palestinian students as well as 20 clinics.

Delegates agree to minimum standards on strategies for world human rights meeting

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Over three consecutive conferences, representatives of international human rights organisations set forth their efforts to draw up unified strategies for the world conference to be held in Vienna in June.

Last week's conference in Egypt disclosed deep-rooted snags linked mainly to the nature of human rights in the Arab World, but, according to Jordanian participants, they were overcome.

Although the recommendations are as yet unavailable, the Jordanian delegation summed up in a press conference Wednesday the main obstacles encountered and the achievements of the three-day meeting, held between April 10 and 12.

"It is true that what we were aspiring to achieve at an Arab level was not fulfilled, but we agreed on the minimum standards required at this stage," said

Asma Khader, a prominent lawyer and human rights activist. "One of the recommendations agreed upon dealt with the need to pressure the governments to ratify the treaty on banning all sorts of discrimination against women."

According to Ms. Khader, who is a member of the Royal Commission on Human Rights, the last three conferences, held in Canada, Tunisia and Egypt have been useful in the sense that they have provided the chance for all parties to get acquainted with the main problems and violations of human rights in the Arab World and at the international level.

Also, they shed light on the sensitive questions that will not be addressed on the one hand and the problems to be tackled in a universal context on the other.

"Participants voiced their concern over the non-ratification of many Arab countries to international treaties and conventions on human rights," said lawyer Hani Al Dahleh.

"They have also recommended that current legislations have to be amended in a way to go hand in hand with international conventions," he added.

One major obstacle, but at the same time an advantage, according to Ms. Khader, might be the double or sometimes triple presence of organisations representing the Arab countries, Libya, Sudan, Bahrain, Iraq and Morocco were each represented by one organisation reflecting the government's view and another organisation voicing the opposition's perceptions.

"The difference that existed between the different parties can be considered healthy since we can't expect progress in the human rights field without accepting ideological and political pluralism," she said.

But one of the irritating aspects of the conference, from the Jordanian point of view, was that some countries deliberately tried to overlook the positive change

that occurred in Jordan in favour of human rights and democracy.

Also, some participants felt that the issue of lifting the U.N. imposed embargo on Iraq and Libya was not sufficiently tackled, nor was the issue of political prisoners in Iraq, Kuwait and Syria.

However, participants from all countries agreed to include as a recommendation the condemnation selectivity and double standards in human rights applications.

They also reached a consensus on the importance of addressing environmental problems, including pollution, mismanagement, and the export of toxic waste to industrial countries to third world countries.

Participants agreed that governments should adopt appropriate policies to combat religious extremism, but insisted that this policy should be consistent with human rights laws.

Islamic panel calls for global drug problem meeting

By Ella Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Amman-based Council of Islamic Organisations and Societies (CIOS) in Jordan is planning to convene an international conference as part of its drive to stem the growing danger of drug trafficking and drug addiction around the world.

Council Secretary General Abdul Latif Subeihli told the Jordan Times that efforts underway to hold the meeting at the highest political level so that responsible decisions can be taken to help countries combat the danger of drugs.

Two previous international conferences were held five and two years ago in London and Islamabad, but most of their resolutions were ignored since they were held at the technicians and experts levels, Mr. Subeihli said.

"Our drive to convene this conference is to stem the spread of drug addiction among students, workers and youths in general, which seems to be on the increase despite individual countries' counter measures," Mr.

Subeihli added.

The council, which was founded in 1974, issued several appeals over the last eight years, urging nations to take drastic measures against drug traffickers and producers in view of the growing threat to the lives of the young generations, he added.

According to Mr. Subeihli, the council has circulated an appeal to various nations through their embassies in Amman, or directly to the different countries, putting forth 11 proposals to deal with the drug issue.

In Amman, the council requested Parliament to enact legislation imposing the heaviest penalties on those who deal in drugs.

Referring to the earlier appeals, Mr. Subeihli said that favourable responses came from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and a few other Arab states.

The council's 11 proposals as circulated to embassies in Jordan follow:

1- Convening an international conference to discuss the drug problem with a view to concluding an agreement that can help stem the spread of narcotics.

2- Each country to issue legislation imposing the heaviest possible penalties on those who deal with drugs.

3- Confiscation of all assets of those involved in the drug business.

4- Conducting laboratory tests on the urine and blood of all motorists to ensure that they are not drug addicts, and cancelling licences of addicts.

5- Conducting the same tests on each person applying for work at any public or private organisation.

6- Conducting similar tests on secondary school and university students as well as workers in factories and firms and dismissing those taking drugs.

7- Allocating big financial awards for those collaborating with the authorities in discovering drug traffickers and drug users.

8- Issuing an international warning through the U.N. Security Council to all countries growing drug plants or those which assist the traffickers. In the case of a favourable response, those countries should be boycotted economically and politically, and severed from the United Nations.

9- The confiscation of agricultural lands grown with narcotic plants, and the seizure of all land used in their cultivation.

10- Exchange of information among various nations concerning drugs.

11- Combating drug-related violations by imposing capital punishment on traffickers.



THE GENERAL Assembly of the Jordanian-Syrian Maritime Company Wednesday holds a meeting in Amman to chart plans for the company's expansion. Topics on the agenda included a proposal for the purchase of a third cargo vessel before mid-1993 to boost the firm's operations. Discussions covered shipping operations between the Middle East and various international ports and ways to promote the services of the company's two vessels which operate between north-western Europe and Syrian ports (Petra photo)

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Sharif Zeid condoles Turkish envoy

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Thouqan Al Hindawi and Minister of State for the Prime Ministry Affairs Ibrahim Izzeddin, Wednesday visited the Turkish embassy in Amman. The three offered condolences over the death of Turkish President Turgut Ozal who died Saturday of a heart attack.

Jordan celebrates Labour Day May 1

AMMAN (Petra) — All ministries, government departments and public institutions will be closed on May 1 in observance of Labour Day, according to a communique issued Wednesday by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker.

JUST to host AAU council meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Under Royal patronage, the 26th session of the Association of Arab Universities (AAU) Council will be held on April 24 at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST). Taking part in the three-day meeting will be presidents of the Arab universities and members of the AAU. Participants will discuss the activities of the association's general secretariat over the past year, recommendations and resolutions of the last meeting and the proposed plan of action. Participants will also examine requests by some Arab universities to join the association and will discuss a report on the activities of the AAU fund for supporting Palestinian universities. The AAU includes 83 Arab universities.

Seminar focuses on waste disposal methods

AMMAN (Petra) — Perhaps one of the main challenges facing development in Jordan is the difficulty in disposing of solid, liquid and gaseous waste, according to the Jordan Society for the Prevention of Environmental Pollution (JSPEP).

The society's vice chairman, Mohammad Masalha, made the statement at the opening of a one-day seminar, organised at the Amman Regency Hotel recently by the JSPEP in cooperation with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation in Jordan, entitled: "Problems of Waste and Proposed Solutions."

With the increase of urban societies, the problem of waste continues to grow not only in terms of collecting it from homes and factories, but also in disposing of it, said Dr. Masalha.

Methods of waste disposal included dumping and recycling, but in view of the increasing waste, more serious efforts ought to be exerted towards utilising modern technology in the disposal of refuse material, he added.

The JSPEP has adopted plans for a public awareness campaign on way of reducing the amounts of waste or the treatment of waste in the safest possible manner.

May 2 holiday to see various sector activities

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan will observe a public holiday Sunday, May 2, in celebration of His Majesty King Hussein's 40th anniversary of his assumption of the constitutional powers.

The anniversary will assume a special significance this year and will be celebrated in different parts of the country.

The Ministry of Education announced that thousands of school students will be participating in a variety of performances at Al Hussein Youth City's Palace of Culture.

A total of 2,200 male and female students will take part in these festivities that will include national songs presented for the first time in Jordan.

Also, 1,550 scouts will present a variety of physical exercises at the Youth City Stadium.

More than 100 Jordanian companies plan to mark the anniversary with a major exhibition of Jordan's historical developments under the leadership of King Hussein with a display of photographs.

Meanwhile, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Tuesday began publishing interviews with heads of secretaries general of political parties in Jordan who were asked to present their views about the anniversary.

Among those interviewed Tuesday was Ishaq Farhan, Islamic Action Front Party Secretary General, who paid tribute to King Hussein's effort over the last four decades at the domestic, pan-Arab and international levels.

Tayseer Al Himsi, Secretary General of Jordanian Arab Baath Socialist Party recalled King Hussein's nationalist stands and his drive to ensure democracy for Jordan's citizens.

The inauguration was attended by high-ranking Ministry of Agriculture and other government officials, as well as by senior U.S. embassy staff and a large number of concerned citizens and farmers.

The RASC at Ramtha is one of

four RASCs constructed and equipped with United States Agency for International Development (USAID) assistance along with the main National Centre for Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer (NCARTT) at Baqaa.

NCARTT has the specific responsibility for the identification, testing, transfer, and improved adoption of technical, management and policy information which contributes to the achievement of Jordan's national agricultural development goals.

Ramtha agricultural service centre opens for region

AMMAN (USIS) — The Regional Agricultural Service Centre (RASC) at Ramtha Wednesday was formally inaugurated by Minister of Agriculture Fayez Al Khasawneh and United States Ambassador to Jordan Roger Harrison at an opening ceremony.

The inauguration was attended by high-ranking Ministry of Agriculture and other government officials, as well as by senior U.S. embassy staff and a large number of concerned citizens and farmers.

The RASC at Ramtha is one of

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The RASC at Ramtha is one of

وزارة الأشغال العامة والإسكان
دائرة المقاولات الحكومية
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS & HOUSING
GOVERNMENT TENDERS DIRECTORATE

Ministry of Public Works & Housing Government Tenders Directorate General Tenders Announcement Invitation to Tender No. (47 / 93)

Firms specialised in computer field with experience in the following areas:

- Open Systems Solution (O.S.I.)
- Multi user environment.
- Integration and turnkey projects of electronic data processing centres.

Are invited to submit their proposal according to the following:

- Scope of Project:
Computerisation project of TCC
This project aims at the establishment of electronic data processing centre and data network provides computer and automation services at TCC sites country wide. The project is mainly composed of the following (on the basis of turnkey project):
 - Site preparation with all facilities necessary for computer centres such as security doors, alarm system, fire system, false ceiling, etc.
 - Provision and installation of power supply equipment (U.P.S.) and its accessories.
 - Provision and installation of cooling system.
 - Construction of data network.
 - Provision and installation of data communication equipment such as modems, multiplexers and local area network.
 - Provision and installation of electronic data processing equipment, terminals, printers, magnetic tape drives, graphic workstations and the required base software.
 - Training of TCC staff.
- Each tender price JD (150) non-refundable.
- Last date for purchase of tender document on May 22th, 1993.
- Offers shall be submitted to the Government Tenders Directorate before 13:30 local time on Tuesday 22th of June 1993.

**Chairman, General Tenders Committee
Government Tenders Directorate
Eng. Basheer Al Jaghbeer**

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition entitled "Legend of Petra II" by artist S. Shaker, at the National Gallery for Fine Arts.
- ★ Art exhibition by artists Zaid and Adnan Yahya at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition by Syrian Artist Lajaina Al Aseel at Baladna Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of books and educational facilities at the International Expo Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of prints, entitled "Architectural Motifs from the Arab World," by Rima Farah at The Gallery, Hotel Jordan Intercontinental.
- ★ Exhibition of watercolour paintings by Lebanese artist Randa Berouti at Romero Restaurant.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Hanan Al Dasouqi at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of chemical materials and experiments for school students at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST).

- ★ Exhibition of ceramics by Margaret Tadros at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ "Earth Day" exhibition which displays materials for teaching children about protecting the environment, including pamphlets, videos, software and books at the American Centre.

THEATRE

- ★ Arabic play entitled "The Dawn and Sunset of a Girl Called Yasmin" at 7 p.m. at the Royal Cultural Centre.

CONCERT

- ★ Qanun and piano concert by Gamal Abdul Mun'em, Hans Lerchbacher and Christian Seuffert at 8 p.m. at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILM

- ★ A 1990 feature film entitled "Reversal of Fortune," starring Glenn Close, at the American Centre at 5 p.m. (R-rated, III min.)

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

جوردان تايمز صحيفة سياسية مستقلة تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية

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Stress takes its toll in Sarajevo

By Mark Heinrich
Reuter

SARAJEVO — Mirko and Rada Horvat were lingering on their doorstep chatting with neighbours when a Serb mortar bomb landed a few metres away.

The Horvats' five-year-old son, playing nearby, was torn to pieces. Mirko and Rada survived, but she lost a leg and he lost his mind.

Horvat, a Croat, marks time now in Sarajevo's main psychiatric ward, suffering from paralytic melancholy. His crippled wife stays with him, so sad herself she can scarcely speak.

They are among the tens of thousands of Sarajevo civilians who, after a year under a siege by Serb artillery and snipers, are afflicted by post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), local psychiatrists say.

Slobodan Lojo, director of

Kosevo Hospital's psychiatric clinic, estimates that 30 to 50 per cent of Sarajevo's 380,000 inhabitants are suffering from some form of the syndrome.

In the long run, the worst affected would be the children, Dr. Lojo said.

He said many Sarajevo residents began to have nightmares after the "bread queue massacre" in May 1992. Pictures of mutilated bodies strewn across a blood-drenched street after a Serb mortar barrage were shown repeatedly on local television.

"We are finding a mental disorder spread through a civilian community which, in this magnitude, used to be found only among soldiers who served on front lines," said Ljiljana Oruc, a Kosevo psychiatrist specialising in treatment of PTSD.

She said symptoms recalled the agony of American veterans of

the Vietnam war who could not readjust to civilian life at home — catatonic fear and depression, nightmarish flashbacks and uncontrollable outbursts of aggression in previously even-tempered people.

"We have had cases where people so despairing of ever feeling safe again have just gone out to stand in the street waiting to be hit by a sniper," Dr. Oruc told Reuters.

She wants to set up a special centre for the rehabilitation of Sarajevo's unhinged by the siege. Those who have already sought help represent only a tiny minority, she said.

"Some people just knock on my door, asking me to come over and treat their poor mother," others are prevented from getting psychiatric treatment by their fear of emerging from homes in front-line high rise neighbourhoods menaced by snipers.

Up to 45 new cases are being handled by the Kosevo clinic each month, four times the pre-war average. Finding beds for the seriously disturbed is getting more difficult as some patients cannot return to homes in embattled districts.

About 8,500 people in the city have been killed during the siege and 50,000 — 70 per cent of them civilians — have been wounded.

Before the war Dr. Oruc had a colleague at Kosevo Hospital named Radovan Karadzic, now the political leader of the insurgent Serbs.

Mr. Karadzic is long gone but tens of thousands of Serbs who did not join his revolt against an independent multi-ethnic Bosnia still live in Sarajevo, some weathering the gunfire of their rebel compatriots.

Dr. Oruc says she has treated Sarajevo Serbs for PTSD with an

extra dimension — paranoia about what will befall them after the guns fall silent.

"They ask, 'How can I avoid being murdered later by Muslims or Croats who lost their whole families to Serb nationalists'?" Dr. Oruc said. "They're afraid Sarajevo will not be their home anymore."

The Serb artillery and mortar fire that pummelled Sarajevo virtually without respite for months has abated dramatically since a U.N.-brokered ceasefire took effect on March 28.

But it is a cruelly deceptive calm for Sarajevo who had become used to the macabre routine of shelling that kept most bottled up indoors, miserable but at least relatively safe.

Now, residents lured outside by spring sun must beware of snipers opening up at any moment from invisible perches in Serb-occupied apartment blocks.

Five minutes before the Tenuous ceasefire took effect, a mortar bomb hit an intersection opposite a popular restaurant, killing four people. Snipers have wounded dozens more since.

Those Sarajevo who can pay

the astronomical petrol prices of wartime drive at breakneck speed on exposed streets to avoid snipers, endangering pedestrians and adding to the inescapable pall of peril and pressure that cloaks the city.

"War changes to peace and back to war from one day, or one hour, to the next. It disturbs us very deeply," said 23-year-old Jasmina Slijivo, a widowed Muslim mother of three.

A sniper cut down her husband last June. Her parents and brother were arrested soon after wards in the Serb-held suburb where they lived and she hasn't heard from them since.

Ms. Slijivo had herself admitted to the Kosevo ward after swallowing acid in an abortive suicide attempt.

"For most Sarajevo, this has been a primarily psychological war against civilisation," said Dr. Oruc, whose city once exemplified ethnic co-existence and cosmopolitan culture in old Yugoslav.

"I'm very concerned that many people here won't be able to run their lives and cope with normal daily stress after the war ends."

Reciprocity of verdicts

THE DECISION by the foreign ministers of the Arab parties to the peace process to attend the ninth round of bilateral peace talks with Israel on April 27 should take no one by surprise. There was never any doubt about the willingness of the Arab side to continue the negotiations as the Arab governments had already adopted a strategic decision to participate in the peace process according to the Madrid formula of 1991. What held up the Arab acceptance to proceed to the U.S. capital on April 20, however, were several major obstacles that needed removal first.

The primary reason why the Palestinian and the other Arab parties wanted the outstanding problems to be solved ahead of the resumption of talks is that the Arabs have been very serious about their talks with Israel and wanted to make sure that the next rounds were going to be not only serious but productive as well. No wonder the Arab final verdict to attend came in the wake of intensive inter-Palestinian consultations that were conducted on the strength of the equally exhaustive inter-Arab discussions on how to proceed. The Arab factor naturally played a major role in convincing the Palestinians that assurances required from the U.S. and Israel were on balance sufficient to enable their delegation to go back to the Washington talks. The main point, however, is that both Israel and the U.S. should be more genuine and accommodating this time around. Should this year's efforts by those two sides prove as sterile and ineffective as last year's, then the Arabs would be more than justified in concluding that the Israeli government is none too keen on resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its dimensions.

On top of the list of priorities for the Arab side is the application of U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 on the West Bank and Gaza Strip in addition to its applicability to the other fronts. This means that Israel must show by word and deed that the principle of exchanging land for peace includes a total Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian territories. There is no longer any excuse for intermediate solutions to the West Bank and Gaza Strip as the recent events in Israel and the occupied territories have created a de facto separation between them. Also high on the list of confidence-building measures that Israel should be expected to announce is a swift resolution of the expellee issue. As long as this problem is allowed to fester, it is bound to undermine the Palestinian desire for participation and progress. Since Israel has conceded in principle that the repatriation of the Palestinian deportees can and should be accelerated, there is no good cause to keep the issue hanging ominously over the heads of the delegations next week.

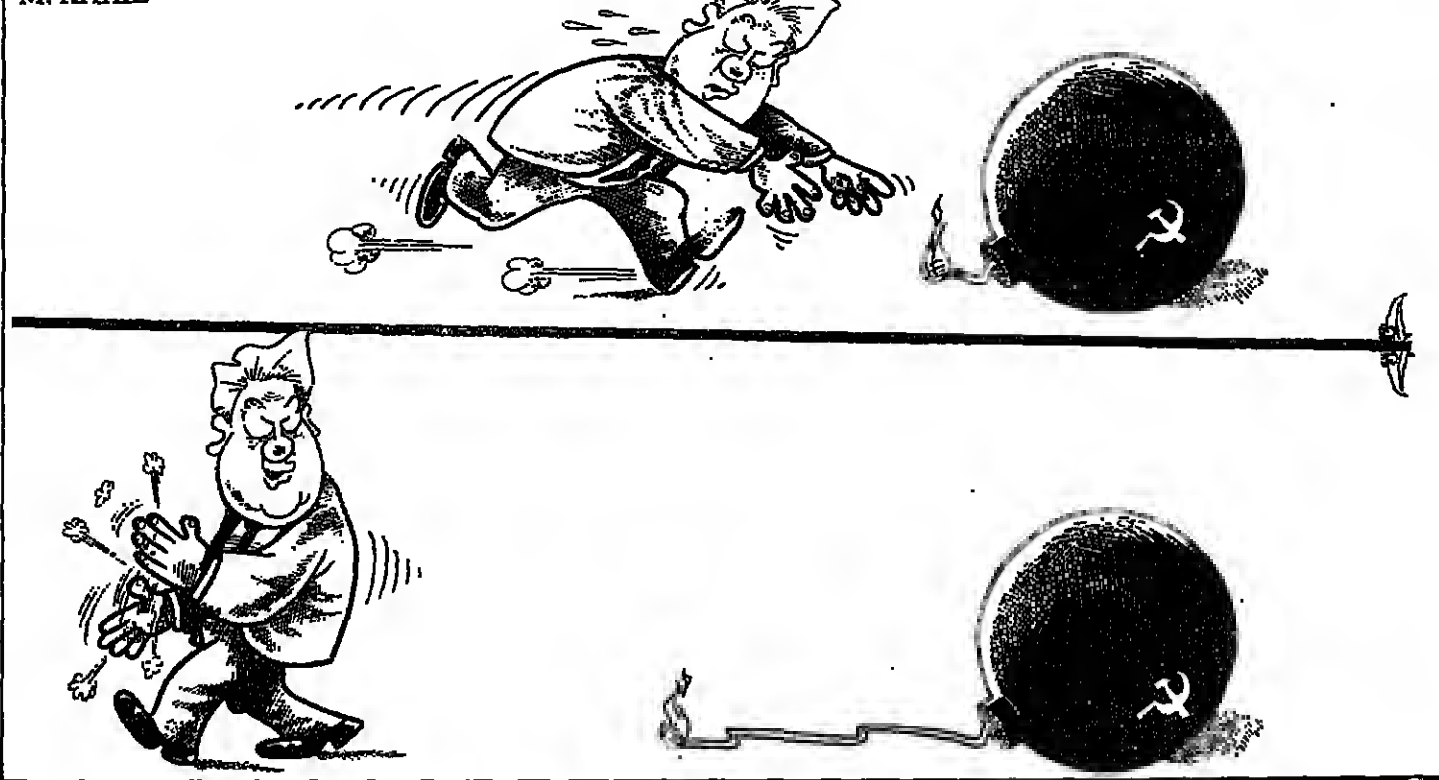
The Arab verdict in favour of taking part in the ninth round needs to be reciprocated by an equally sober Israeli decision to make the climate for conducting the coming negotiations that much more favourable to achieving results. This entails easing up the state of siege still imposed on the Palestinians under occupation. The forces of moderation in the occupied territories need to be strengthened, and only a lifting of the siege against them can help the moderates gain ground. Otherwise Palestinian ranks may end up being deeply and dangerously split, something that would not augur well for the future of the talks as a whole.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IT LOOKS as though the Israelis and the Americans want to see a continued process of negotiations between the Arabs and the Israeli's but with no real progress towards a lasting settlement, said Al Ra'i daily Wednesday. American officials have recently expressed such a desire when they said that the negotiations should not stop but should be a continued process even though no progress is in sight, said the paper. It must be affirmed that no negotiations, not even mutual recognition by the Arab countries and Israel can bring real peace to the Middle East unless national Arab interests are safeguarded, continued the daily. It should also be pointed out that Washington and Israel seek a kind of peace that can be imposed on the Arabs but does not take into consideration the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, added the paper. Although it is being said that the negotiations are based on resolutions 242 and 338, nothing has been achieved yet towards real peace since Israel is not interested in peace and has to date failed to make any mention of withdrawals from occupied Arab lands, the paper pointed out. The Israelis and the Arabs might be able to reach an agreement in theory, but the struggle cannot end by ink on paper, with no practical moves on the ground, the paper stressed. It said more theories can be by no means end sufferings and the tragedies caused by Israel's occupation and continued aggression.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily expressed astonishment at the Arab countries excessive zeal towards reaching peace with Israel but not over moves to bring about reconciliation among themselves. It is rather strange to hear Arab League member states declare that the time was not ripe yet for ending inter-Arab differences, said Tareq Masarweh. The writer said the meetings of Arab foreign ministers at the Arab League headquarters in Cairo remain meaningless if they are not intended to serve national Arab interests. I believe that the Arab ministers met in order only to ensure that the process of normalising their countries' relations with Israel was proceeding according to plan and that relations among Arab countries remain strained, said Masarweh. Those Arab officials' statements that the time has not come yet to end inter-Arab differences reflect the stand of lunatics, he added. We cannot understand how these Arabs, who are supposedly linked by the Arab League Charter can adopt such an attitude at a time when solidarity among their countries is most needed, said the writer. Masarweh said the Arab countries' slogans, as they now stand, merely say yes to peace with Israel and no to peace among Arabs.

M. KAHIL



Russian market reforms destined for more caution

By Brian Killen
Reuter

MOSCOW — With or without President Boris Yeltsin at the helm, Russia is destined to steer a more cautious course towards a market economy.

Russia's 100 million or so voters will have a chance to influence economic reform in a referendum on Yeltsin's policies Sunday, but there are signs that the wind is already blowing in a different direction.

Russian economists believe that even if Mr. Yeltsin wins, there will be a more conservative approach to the economy. Some think whoever rules the Kremlin will have to follow the same path.

"It is wrong to say that without Yeltsin, there will be no reform," said Pyotr Karpov, deputy head of the Supreme Economic Council, economic think-tank of the conservative parliament.

He told Reuters people were no longer prepared to accept radical pro-market policies. Last year's price liberalisation impoverished millions, and led to soaring crime and widespread disenchantment with the very concept of a market economy.

Mr. Yeltsin himself has ruled out a second period of "shock therapy", saying it is time to take a breather and change pace. "The period of reformist romanticism is over," Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin told industrialists last week, signalling a departure from the policies adopted by his predecessor Yegor Gaidar.

Nikolai Vishnevsky, spokesman for former Economics Minister Andrei Nekhayev, said recent cabinet changes reflected the new attitude. Mr. Yeltsin this month named Oleg Lobov, a moderate reformer, as deputy prime minister responsible for the economy.

"These people (Chernomyrdin and Lobov) cannot be described as 100 per cent conservative. They can bring about changes, but the tempo may be different," he said.

Whatever the outcome of the referendum, a return to the command-administrative methods of the Soviet era is virtually impossible and indicated only by a few extremists.

Market reforms have taken root and Russia now has a

cept of a market economy.

ful alliance of emerging entrepreneurs and former communist industrialists with a vested interest in developing business activity that should rule out turning back the clock.

Some western leaders have described Mr. Yeltsin as personifying reforms, and the Group of Seven leading industrial nations has just pledged more than \$40 billion to support the process. But Mr. Karpov believes "Western conventional wisdom" is mistaken.

"Yeltsin and reforms are not synonymous... defeat for Yeltsin can only be positive for the economy," he said, adding that western aid should be linked to reform and not to Mr. Yeltsin.

The economist said it was wrong to impose western economic models on Russia, where industry is structured differently with businesses intertwined in such a way that one bankruptcy could have a disastrous knock-on effect.

"Yeltsin has been misled by people who do not understand the system... he said. "Western education is more mobile and adapts quickly to market con-

ditions, but our industry is like an elephant."

Sergei Stankevich, an adviser to Mr. Yeltsin, said the future of reform was closely connected to the president's fate, but other forces were capable of bearing responsibility for reform.

If Mr. Yeltsin were to be ousted, much would depend on his successor. The most likely candidate is Vice President Alexander Rutskoi, a conservative reformer and opponent of the present radical privatisation programme.

Mr. Rutskoi appears to follow the parliament's line on most issues, with a strong emphasis on controlled moves towards a market economy, social security and anti-corruption.

A Rutskoi presidency would probably sweep from the cabinet key liberal members, and there would be a watering down of some policies, especially privatisation.

Mr. Chernomyrdin also favours controlled reforms and greater support for agriculture and industry to cope with inflation, officially estimated at 2,600 per cent last year.

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De Klerk seen ceding authority to 'president' Mandela

By Rodney Pinder
Reuter

JOHANNESBURG — Blacks still do not have the vote in South Africa but in the turbulent aftermath of the assassination of Chris Hani it seemed as though "president" Nelson Mandela had already taken office.

His was the calming voice broadcast twice on state television as the nation trembled on the brink of a race war.

He sought to reassure whites while confronting angry black township youths with a message of racial reconciliation they did not want to hear.

President F.W. De Klerk kept such a low profile during the deepest national crisis in years that it is being widely said he effectively handed over moral authority to the man he freed from 27 years in jail for fighting white rule.

"This was the week when moral authority passed visibly from the government to the African National Congress. It was to Mr. Nelson Mandela that the country turned," wrote white liberal columnist Ken Owen.

"Power slipped visibly from the limp hands at Groote Schuur (Mr. De Klerk's residence) to the stronger hands at Shell House (ANC headquarters)."

Business Day newspaper, required reading for the whites who run the economy, said in an editorial Mr. De Klerk had become defensive, preoccupied with claims that whites were threatened because a black had died.

"While the president deploys 25,000 troops to protect whites, it is ANC President Mandela whose utterances are more statesman-like... (De Klerk) has sadly misjudged the situation."

The appearances on state television by both leaders following Communist Party leader Hani's assassination on April 10 particularly struck many analysts.

Breaking precedent, Mr. Mandela was twice given prime time slots to address the nation.

"When crises required a national figure, it was always the white prime minister or president," said media analyst Raymond Louw. "This time, the calming voice throughout was Mandela's."

Mr. Mandela stressed repeatedly that while a white man killed Mr. Hani, fast action by a white witness led to a quick arrest.

Mr. De Klerk appeared twice in interviews in which he spoke mostly in his native Afrikaans, regarded by millions of blacks as the language of apartheid oppression.

Mr. Louw says apartheid treated blacks as inanimate objects with no feelings, to be manipulated and moved around at will.

"I don't think white ministers are capable of understanding black people are people. Their anger is boiling. I don't think De Klerk has a full understanding or realisation of what's going on," he said.

Each de Beer, leader of the liberal Democratic Party, says Mr. de Klerk — who overturned 300 years of white supremacy by releasing Mr. Mandela, unbanning black politics and beginning the demolition of apartheid — has lost his touch.

"He's losing confidence. He's not as good as he was. He's not the formidable person he was," he said.

The Democratic Party tried in vain to persuade Mr. de Klerk to suspend parliament Monday for Mr. Hani's funeral. The government was not represented at the burial or memorial services.

Mr. de Klerk instead used the occasion to warn the nation of racial conflict.

"He goes through phases in which he feels loyalty to his traditional constituency very strongly. It's bloody silly," Mr. de Beer said.

"A constituency consisting of conservative Afrikaners is of such little importance no hard-headed politician should pay it any attention."

Efforts by the National Party to win over 18 million first-time black voters appear to be largely unsuccessful, according to polls.

Leaders of the party which invented apartheid have been quieter lately in assertions it can win a democratic election.

Insiders say the party is deeply split between elements who believe Mr. de Klerk has "gone soft" on blacks and those who think the best route for survival lies in an alliance with the ANC.

Not all thorns for us

To the Editor:

I very much enjoyed the Diary published in the Jordan Times Weekender of April 15, 1993.

I think the presentation of news reporting as well as the analysis of events offered to the Jordan Times readers is very good. With regard to Jordan Times criticising the U.S. policy, this is fully warranted as the U.S. has never deviated, since 1947, from supporting Israel militarily, financially and in the international forums. One should just remember how many times the U.S. exercised the right of veto in the United Nations Security Council to deadlock any action taken by the latter against Israel's inhuman treatment of the inhabitants of the occupied Arab territories.

In the same issue of the above-mentioned Weekender, there was published, by a happy coincidence, a review of the "extraordinarily revealing book" titled "The Passionate Embrace" by the well-known American politician and writer George Ball and his son Douglas. The book is a scathing criticism of the U.S.'s partial policy towards and unwavering attachment to Israel. The authors go further than that for they "trace the cooperation of successive American administrations to Israel's subservience through each of the presidents since 1947." So no one could blame the Jordan Times for its criticism of the U.S. policy, if the case warrants it, towards the Palestinians in particular and the Arabs in general.

At the same time, the Arabs cannot be exonerated from blame and should be subjected to harsh criticism for their inactivity, disunity and divisiveness. The Arabs should permeate American public opinion in the U.S. by intense publicity in all forms of media to explain the justness of the Arab and Palestinian causes. This should primarily be the business of the Arab-American organisations such as the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) and the Arab Institute working in the United States. To help those organisations in their noble efforts, the Arabs should be generous in their financial contributions to them.

I wish to take this opportunity to state frankly that the Jordan Times news reporting and its objective analysis of internal matters, as well as of events occurring in Jordan or elsewhere in the world, are most informative and enlightening and I often fail to find them in any weekly, daily newspaper or magazine.

I am confident that the Jordan Times will keep up the excellent line of journalism whether on the international or internal plane. Your staff deserve encouragement and moral reward for the meritorious job they are doing.

Pascal B. Karny,
Amman.

Expensive letters

To the Editor:

Recent suggestions of improvements to the postal services could start with the supplying of more post-boxes all over the city.

On April 14, I posted six letters in my usual green box by the regular time, 9 a.m. At 12:30 p.m., the same day, I returned with two more letters only to find the box gone and a heap of rubble in its place! Not only did it take me considerable time and harassment to find another one without resorting to a taxi-ride to the Bayader post office, but I wonder if my six airmail letters, which were rather important, will ever reach their destination.

I would really like someone from the post office administration to tell me what happened to the box and if my letters were taken out of it to be delivered.

Second, please could more post-boxes be installed? Removing that one must have caused considerable inconvenience to many more people besides myself. What was the reason?

Invariably, if ever I ask anybody in a different area where there is a box, they never have any idea and tell me to use a post office which is several kilometres away! Having no car I do not want to pay for taxis just to post a letter! Stamps are quite expensive without that and the time involved. I buy stamps in bulk every month so that I do not have to go in a post office and queue each time I want to write a letter.

Chris Larter,
P.O. Box 140508,
Amman.

Sombre lines

To the Editor:

I was very thrilled to find my name on April 21, 1993, between the obituaries.

Probably whoever did the layout thought watercolour was some kind of a Rinal for the dead.

Since for us artists, exhibitions are more related to birth than to death, to congratulations than to condolences, keeping art announcements between those giving birth or those still alive would be of much better taste.

Randa Berouti,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.



Society in supposedly 'fundamentalist' Sudan is more open than ours

Turabi: Islam not against cultural integration; closed tribal tradition is the problem

By Sana Atiyeh

The writer has just returned from a week-long visit to Sudan. Here are impressions about her visit to that Arab African state.

EXPECTATIONS were different than the reality as I saw it in Khartoum. The first impression as our small bus drove through the Sudanese capital was that of surprise for many of us from the press team visiting this country for the first time. The capital on one very hot afternoon resembled rural Africa, where only the main streets were paved. Dozens of men, women and children were seen packed into windowless wooden buses and pickup trucks being transported from one place to another.

It also came as a surprise and a relief for some of us to find a number of Sudanese women, whose beauty was sometimes beyond description, whose heads were unveiled in public.

The first misconception some of us had about Sudan was erased from our minds: The misconception that the Islamic "fundamentalist" regime imposed the veil, or "tobe", on women. I was told that the regime two years ago had apparently tried to impose the tobe — a traditional Sudanese Indian-sari-like cloth wrapped around the woman from head to toe.

Young vigilante men had tried to harass Western-clothed women into covering their hair, but their insistence on choosing their own dress led the government to order the vigilantes to stop their activities. But most of the women who wear the tobe do so more out of tradition than anything else.

Though the Sudanese people are religious in nature,

their tolerance of others and different practices appeared high. Sudanese men, from Hassan Turabi (probably the most powerful man in Sudan today) to Sheikh Ibrahim Muhammad Osman of the Sufi Burhani "Tariqa" (way) and down to the man on the street, shake hands with women — a gesture non-existent among the religious in Jordan, for instance. This may be a small example of the Sudanese-style Islam, but it is also evidence of their progressive thinking.

Perhaps it is the ways of the mainstream Islamists in Jordan and Palestine that gave us the idea that Sudan would resemble a state-run version of the Muslim Brotherhood. The superficial social priorities of the Muslim Brotherhood inside or outside our parliament — such as segregating the sexes at schools and recreational centres, preventing fathers from seeing their daughters during school activities, banning male hairdressers, and suing a woman for blasphemy because she interpreted verses of the Koran differently than the sheikhs — are actually seen as backward by prominent Muslim leaders in Sudan.

Dr. Turabi, who left quite an impression on some of us, blamed the suppression of women's freedoms on bedouin and tribal thinking, rather than on Islam. In fact, he told this journalist and two others during an interview in his office that Islam liberated women, and segregation was not part of the religion. Men and women prayed together

in the mosques and worked together during the Prophet Mohammad's days, he stressed.

This world-renowned Islamic leader told us that women could not be suppressed under Islamic tenets and that they have a lot to give to society and in the workplace.

In the hour-long interview, where he outlined his philosophy, Dr. Turabi insisted that women have rights that have to be protected, and that men do not have a monopoly over Islam. He said that any Muslim woman has the right of "ijtihad" (interpretation) of the Koran — something rejected by fundamentalist Muslims.

Women politicians in Sudan's Islamic "fundamentalist" government are also trying to rid their country of some African traditional habits that degrade girls and women. Circumcision of girls, for example, is condemned as "backward" by the regime, and women activists are trying to promote widespread education of the girls.

Today, the majority of the student body at Khartoum University are girls.

Perhaps it is such ideas that have gained Dr. Turabi so much support from the women who have embraced the religion based on conviction (as is required in Islam) rather than being coerced into it.

Dr. Turabi, who is very unpopular in the West and accused of being a repressive "evil" fanatic (a quality that seems very far-fetched when listening to him), talked about utilising Islam for economic progress, productivity, self-sufficiency, cultural and artistic development, and social justice. "This is real socialism," he insisted as he talked about the equal distribution of wealth required in one of the pillars of Islam, the Zakat, where a percentage of profits is distributed among the needy. But the Muslim scholar admitted that his philosophy and programme, which he described as a "new model of Islam," would be difficult to expand since it would have emerged from a country like Sudan, where the infrastructure is lacking and the civil war in the south had drained the country's resources.

The Christians

I met the first southern Sudanese Christian at the Sudanese ambassador's residence in Amman the day before we travelled to Khartoum on a government-sponsored trip. He is the labour minister who was attending the recent Arab Labour Ministers' Conference in Amman. The minister told us in his unusual Arabic accent how the Pope, who visited Khartoum earlier this year, was at first taken by surprise when he knelt down to kiss his cross.

The impressions I had in

Khartoum regarding the Christians might have differed from some of my colleagues.

After reading press reports that the Christians were oppressed by the regime and forced into converting to Islam, I woke up at 5:30 a.m. to catch the early Easter Sunday mass at St. Matthew's cathedral — a large Catholic Church — near the Nile. Along with another journalist, a photographer and a Japanese television crew, we sneaked out of the hotel before the other journalists and our Information Ministry guides had woken up. For where else can one get the Christian side of the story?

The bells rang for the 7 a.m. Arabic-language mass. The singing of the people inside the church made me feel emotional indeed. Their hallelujahs and the sparkling eyes of the young singing girls were full of life and soul as they swayed to the music coming from two electric guitars and the beats of barrel-looking drums echoing through the high-ceilinged cathedral, which had a large statue of Christ on the cross.

Hundreds of well-dressed people waited outside for the English mass to begin as a sudden sandstorm swept through the grounds of the church. Trying to raise my voice above the howling wind, I began talking to some young men standing near the back entrance of the cathedral. I started to ask questions. I spoke in English and they assumed I was American. I did not refute their guessing, hoping they would be more comfortable and honest in answering some of my questions if they believed I was a Western Christian. I wanted to know if they faced discrimination as Christians from the south.

Many of them, whose names varied from James to John to Dominique, began speaking at the same time. James, a student of philosophy at Khartoum University, was aggressive. He asked what sort of picture I had in mind in portraying the Christian community. I said I just wanted to hear their side of the story and that I would relay as honestly as possible what I was told.

One of the men said "you can see for yourself that we come here to pray as we wish." Religious worship is not the problem. The problem to him was unemployment and the unbearable living conditions in the camps for the displaced just outside Khartoum. "All of us came from the south to escape the civil war and poverty," he said. "Unfortunately, the poverty followed us here." James, the other man, intervened, saying in perfect English: "You have to understand that the civil war is not a religious war, it's an ethnic war that started with the independence of Sudan from British rule."



Dr. Hassan Turabi outlines his philosophy

I was surprised to hear him voice the same views of the officials we had met throughout the week. All officials, Muslim and Christian, whom we met spoke about religious tolerance and freedom of worship in Sudan. The deputy speaker of the "transitional parliament," Aldo Ajo Deng, who does not even speak Arabic, told us (in English) the same story, adding that his main political aim was to bring the civil war to an end and feed the people of southern Sudan. We were told that the civil war was political, ethnic and tribal, but not religious. And here I was hearing the same story from James and his fellow worshippers.

The other surprise came when we discovered that government departments and institutions were not working because of Easter Sunday, and many shops were closed that day.

So why did I find something different than I expected and read in the media? Is it because Sudan is following Islamic rule that the West and our local "intellectuals" believe it is backward and repressive? Is it because Islam's picture has taken the form of people like Egyptian Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman or the late Ayatollah Khomeini, or even some of our parliamentarians? Is this why some of us have concluded that this is what Islam is all about, and therefore the entire Sudan looks like all the extremists put together? Or is it because minorities in many Arab countries are allied with their regimes for mutual interests that Sudan appears to be suppressing its minority Christians?

One week in Khartoum, of course, is not enough to get the entire and real picture of Sudan's political and social structure. It is very complicated; yet it seemed so simple, for the people are very

simple and modest human beings. But what I witnessed and heard may be different from what some of my colleagues on the trip might have seen. There were definitely Christians, or women, or just Sudanese Muslim men, who had their grievances and were dissatisfied with the current situation in Sudan and were unhappy under the regime of Omar Hassan Al Bashir, who took power in a military coup in 1989.

I heard opposition political leaders complaining about the regime, saying it had brought an economic disaster and political dictatorship to the country. I heard a taxi driver going as far as wanting (former dictator) Ja'far Numeiri back in power and hoped for American intervention in Sudan as in Somalia, thinking they could alleviate the high cost of living, unbearable to most in Khartoum.

But the one week in Khartoum showed me a simple yet warm, generous and beautiful people, enough to make the rest of the Arabs look less beautiful, more selfish and simply busy running after material gains. The rich and poor share the same kind of qualities and open their homes to each other and to their visitors, be they large houses or small shacks.

The week in Khartoum showed me incredibly educated and intellectual young men and women. It showed me progressive and highly-developed minds despite the primitive infrastructure. It showed me a people who are not materialistic and who love their country, regardless of their political views and religious and/or ethnic background. It showed me that the goodness of the Sudanese people is an example that the rest of us Arabs should follow.

Photos by Sana Atiyeh

Diary

COLLECTIVE EFFORT IN NERM'S ABSENCE: Nermeen Murad, the Diary's regular writer, is on a pleasure-business trip to Washington at the present. Everybody at the Jordan Times, or literally everybody, wanted to substitute for her in writing this column. The following can therefore only be a collection of anecdotes and stories collected by staff members in her absence. Political stories have been in short supply this week, but we hope that at least the Diary's inimitable style is maintained in abundance. Form could be more important than substance in extreme cases.

'FIT TO PRINT' OR 'SOUR GRAPES': An Arabic language weekly tabloid appears to have bitten off more than it can chew by suggesting in its latest issue that a University of Jordan poll of voting trends in Jordan could have been financed by Israelis. "Who financed the survey of the University of Jordan's strategic centre and what are its objectives?" screamed an eight-column, colour headline in the April 15 issue of Akbar Al Usboua. In its opening paragraph, the story (which was not bylined) said: "The Jordanian public has been shocked to learn that an American institution, funded by World Zionism, has been interfering in Jordanian domestic affairs under 'academic cover.' This institution aims at infiltrating our society in an attempt to familiarise itself with the Jordanian way of thinking prior to destroying its fabric, through the publication of incorrect information and false and suspicious material. The institution hopes this move (the survey) would lead to the next step of shaking the country's social and national stability and security — an objective which Washington, employing military techniques and naval forces now laying siege to the port of Aqaba, has so far failed to achieve." The unnamed American organisation which was alleged to have sponsored the opinion poll is none other than the National Endowment For Democracy, which is an autonomous institution funded by the U.S. Congress. Media pundits in Jordan who know the facts believe that the story was prompted not by political motives, but by a glaring omission in the finding of the poll — that the publisher of the magazine, a multi-millionaire member of parliament, Issa Raimouni, was not listed as a likely deputy to be re-elected in the next parliamentary elections slated for the fall. Up in arms over the tabloid's allegations, the university is seeking legal recourse for what it views as a flagrant neglect of responsible reporting. Freedom of the press and democracy are not licences for slander, angry university officials say. Is our society to be subjected to the frustrations, whims and out-reachings of newspaper owners? One of them asked. Jordanian courts will soon have their say on the issue. In the meanwhile though, we can be sure if Mr. Raimouni's paper loses the case, its owner and publisher will have no problem in paying the damages. The Rupert Murdoch of Jordan is about to be raked over the coals.

WOMEN JOURNALISTS ON TOP: Some journalists are capable of challenging even nature's rules in order to ensure that their competitors don't get an edge over them. Or at least that is how it appeared in the late hours of Tuesday evening outside the closed doors of the Amman Inter-Continental Hotel's rooftop restaurant where Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat was huddled for nine hours with Palestinian negotiators trying to convince them to return to the negotiating table with the Israelis. Nerves were expectedly on edge among the journalists who eagerly waited outside. No-one obviously knew what was going on inside and everyone patiently waited for the meeting to end, expecting Chairman Arafat to make an announcement, which never happened anyway. At one point during that meeting, however, Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan Tayyeb Abdul Rahim emerged from the room to answer "well... nature's call for a 'p', and entered the men's room. It was a golden opportunity for the male journalists to follow him into the toilet to get some insight into what was going on inside the Crown Patisserie. But, as it turned out, they did not reckon with the determination of a female journalist who was not ready yet to allow the males to scoop her. The lady moved in fast, blocked the door to the men's room and declared: "Either we all go in or nobody does." In the end of course this was the biggest of all scoops.

CHEB AT JERASH?: Rai fans are anxiously waiting to rock at the ancient theatres of Jerash this summer. There are unconfirmed reports of ongoing negotiations between the Jerash Festival Committee and the internationally-renowned Algerian singer Cheb Khaled, who, according to a Newsweek story last week, had Egyptian "girls in the veils really getting it on," to perform at the festival this summer. The Cheb (which means youngman in Arabic), whose song "Didi" gave him a push to sell his 4.5 million records succeeded in getting the young across the globe, eastern and western, to rock to his Rai (opinion) music promoting "simple pleasures," as Newsweek put it. But his opinionated music, which can be heard blasting at parties in mostly affluent West Amman, has drawn fury from strict Arabs and Muslims across the world. Those fundamentalists, as they may be called, question why Cheb Khaled's music, who has been screaming his rai for years, only became famous in the west, and therefore in the east, only recently after the fad of "fundamentalism" became a hot issue. In any case, it is difficult for some of the religious to swallow Khaled's lyrics which they fear could mess up their teenage kids' morality. How could a sheikh, for example, accept an Arab singing a song about a drunken lover who tells his girl, "I'd like to kill your husband to hear your steps" as he did in his hit, "Liah, Liah?" But, it goes without saying, the singer's fans get so big a kick out of his music that they are willing to risk anything to listen to him. Khaled's fans in Jordan — there are so many small kids and teenagers who simply adore his beat — would love to hear that Jerash will host him at this year's festival. Never mind the heavy cost to the budget (some say \$35,000 is needed to bring him here). Cheb Khaled's music will definitely attract thousands of people, especially the young, from across the Kingdom. But there is probably no need for the religious to worry about their children attending his concert(s). They probably would not even understand what he is singing about. Khaled's words are Jibberish at best. His language is a mix of North African Arabic, French, Spanish and Catalan. Yes, Catalan.

Behind its time

God's Peoples: Covenant And Land In South Africa, Israel and Ulster

By Donald Harman Akenson
Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY 1992, \$29.95

This is an eccentric addition to the growing comparative literature on South Africa, Israel and Northern Ireland. While Akenson refers in passing to a few of the other works in this field, in practice he pays little attention to them. In fact, a naive reader might imagine that Donald Akenson was the first person to have had the idea of comparing the siege mentality of Afrikaners, Ulster Protestants and Israeli Jews. But in any event, his approach has little in common with other writers who have made this comparison, such as Michael MacDonald. This is partly because the book is less an analysis of the siege mentality of the dominant communities than a celebration of it through an emphatic narrative of the histories of the three peoples. If Akenson has an intellectual mentor, it is Conor Cruise

O'Brien, whose fulsome praise for the book adorns the dust-jacket.

Akenson argues that each of the societies was profoundly influenced by the religious notion of a covenant with God and that this underpinned a perception of themselves as a chosen people, different from other peoples. This idea has some force and is helpful in illuminating the attitudes of the

BOOK REVIEW

three peoples at various junctures, particularly when circumstances have favoured the dominant community. It is of much less use in understanding the current situation in the three societies. While Akenson is right to underline the role that the culture and the ideology of the dominant community have played in the political development of the three societies, his emphasis on one central idea underestimates the divisions that have existed in the dominant communities in the past. Akenson writes well and it is an

enjoyable book to read. However, readers should be warned that the book contains a number of minor errors of fact and some misconceptions.

Akenson attempts to derive prescriptions for Western policymakers from the conventional mindset of the dominant communities. In particular, he suggests that external pressure on the dominant communities is likely to be counter-productive. This is hardly an original idea, but it is also a distinctly odd judgment to maintain in the light of recent developments in the three societies.

A decade or more ago, a book purporting to have found a significant key to the intransigence and inflexibility of the dominant communities in Israel, South Africa and Northern Ireland might have seemed highly pertinent. That is no longer the case. One does not have to be particularly sanguine about the future prospects of any of these societies to arrive at the harsh conclusion that this is a book behind its times — Middle East International.

Adrian Guelke

Heavy Windows

By Jean-Claude Elias

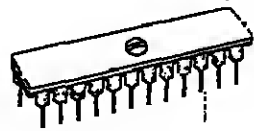
The MS-DOS — Microsoft Disk Operating System — programme that allows a person to use, manage and control an IBM compatible PC (personal computer) has always come under criticism for being unfriendly and difficult to use, more particularly when compared to the Apple Macintosh system. While data processing professionals have been more than satisfied with it, especially with its last and powerful release, named version 5.0, the vast majority of users are still lured with envy to the Macintosh brother, without however being willing to give up on the IBM compatible. Then Microsoft introduced the now famous Windows environment. With it, the PC user was offered the best of both worlds: the MS-DOS and a Macintosh-like system. Details of the features and advantages of both have been previously discussed in this column.

The point is that Windows works as a graphic programme. Whatever you are doing, typing a letter for instance, the text is treated by the computer as a drawing rather than as typed characters. The obvious advantage is that you can easily — though not always quickly — modify the character attributes (size, style, ... etc.) and actually see the effect of the modifications on the monitor. The major drawback is that the PC must redraw the screen, partially or completely, after each change. Even screen scrolling, moving the display up and down, causes a redrawing. This continuous redrawing makes for a relatively slow display that can be quite annoying at times, especially if the contents of the screen are complicated, like a mixture of text and heavy graphics.

Windows is also memory hungry and requires big and fast hard disks. The programme itself is large. In addition, it uses a "virtual memory" process which takes part of the hard disk and books it as a memory-like area. This reduces the actual available disk space. Windows also allows the shuttling between several programmes without the need to close one before going to the other, as it would be the case under regular MS-DOS. This feature, one of Windows major selling points, puts a lot of stress on all the computer's vital points: Memory, processor and disk access time.

What the user sees in the end is a system which brings many invaluable features, user-friendliness and ease of use, but drastically reduces the PC's overall speed. Even a 486-66 machine, the fastest available on the market today,

chip talk



doesn't seem fast enough when running Windows with all its possibilities. Naturally the industry proposes several add-ons to help compensate for this weakness.

First of all, a big and fast hard disk is a must. Capacity less than 120 MB (megabyte or million characters) is not recommended, while 200 to 300 MB is preferable. Access time should be in the range of 16 ms (milliseconds) or less. Hard disks with 11 ms speed are commercially available now. The hard disk controller can be of two types: IDE or SCSI, the latter performing better. The PC should have 8 MB or more of central memory.

The hard disk and the memory questions are nothing when compared to the monitor's (screen) speed problem. Screen performance depends, mainly, on electronic circuits called the display controller (DIC), inside the PC. The DIC's board plugs in the PC's section called a Bus. It is therefore possible to boost the screen's speed and enhance Windows overall performance by changing the DIC and/or the Bus. Instead of the now standard VGA display controller, manufacturers offer special boards called Windows Video Accelerators, that increase the monitor's speed by 10 to 30 per cent. PCs equipped with a "Local Bus" have also shown substantial speed increase compared to the standard ISA Bus. The major problem with both Video Accelerators and Local Buses is precisely the fact that they are non-standard items that can lead to unexpected problems or incompatibility with some programmes or hardware devices.

The best and most elegant solution is in the EISA Bus. It is a well recognised industry standard, works at full 32-bit power (ISA works at 8-bit) and doesn't require gadgets to operate. Currently, few PCs are made with an EISA Bus and they remain expensive. The demand, however, because of Windows and other graphic programmes, is on the increase and prices should start to drop.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

HUMOROUS QUOTATIONS

Wife

A WIFE made to order can't compare with a ready maid.
A FAIR WIFE without a fortune is a fine house without furniture.
BEHIND every man with pull is a woman with push.
HIS WIFE not only edited his works but edited him.
A WIFE is not only to be chosen by the eye only. Choose a wife rather by your ear than your eye.
HOWEVER careful a man is, his wife always finds out his faults.

LET'S SAY IT IN ARABIC

On the plane

— Good morning, sir. Would you like a newspaper?
Sahab el-khair ya sayyedi. Bidek jareeda?
— Yes, please, The Times.
Na'am, min fadlik. Bidek jareedit el-Times.
— Certainly sir. Here you are. And how about you madam?
Bikoll ta'keed, sayyedi. Hadi jareedit el-Times. Wa'anti ya sayyedi, eish bideki?
— Well, have you got a copy of Al Mar'a?
Hassanan, endik noskha min majallet Al Mara'a?
— If you wait a moment. I'll get it for you?
Istanni lahza lamma ajeeb'ha.
— That's very kind of you. Thank you so much. By the way, when do we arrive in London?
Hada karam min'nik. Shukran jazelan. Ala fikra, meta nassel ila London?
— Within four hours from now.
Fee, khilal arba saat minel-aan.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

THE LARGEST number of children produced by one mother is sixty-nine.
SHEEP were first introduced into the United States in 1609.
THE HIGHEST recorded live weigh for a turkey is sixty-four pounds.
THE BONES of a pigeon weigh less than its feathers.
OFTEN a duck swims while sleeping.
THE "FUNNY BONE" is not a bone, it is a nerve.

JOKES

A SENATOR was speaking in a mental institution. During the talk, an inmate called out: "Lousy." Later, he shouted a little louder: "Lousy." Then he got really loud: "Lousy!"
The senator said to the superintendent: "Can't you keep that man quiet? This is very annoying."
"Are you kidding?" he said. "It's the first intelligent word he's spoken in ten years!"

EMPLOYER: Where have you been?
LABOURER: Having a haircut.
EMPLOYER: You can't have your hair cut on my time.
LABOURER: Why not? It grew on your time!!

A LITTLE BOY asked his friend, "How is it your hair is black, while your sister's hair is brown?"
"Well," replied the friend, "My sister was born after my mother dyed her hair brown!"

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. What is the difference between:
(a) slander and libel?
(b) tombola and tombolo?
2. What does a cardiograph register?
3. What was the testudo — or tortoise — that the Romans used when they besieged a city?
4. What kind of weather does an anti-cyclone usually bring?
5. Complete this weather lore saying: "A red sky at night is ..."
6. What would you expect to find in a phial?
7. What is wrong about this statement: "TIN PAN ALLEY is a street noted for the sale of cooking utensils?"
8. How does a periscope work?

HAPPY DREAMS!

LOTTERY: Family troubles are forecast in any dream concerning a lottery or lottery tickets.
MACARONI: Unexpected guests or an impromptu party are predicted in a dream of eating, cooking, or serving macaroni.

JOKES: The meaning of a joke dream depends on the action and reaction. If you heard a joke and were amused, it indicates a disagreement with a friend or an embarrassing social predicament in the offing; to dream of telling a successful joke is an omen of business success, but if it was a dud, it predicts a personal disappointment. Dirty or offensive jokes forecast large profits.

HAMMER: To hear or see a hammer being used is a fortunate dream; if you used it yourself, it predicts a satisfying achievement.

PUZZLES

There are FIFTEEN COLOURS hidden in the jumble of letters below. You should be able to find them by working backwards and forwards along the rows, and by working up and down the columns. All of the letters are used once and only once.

E N I M R A C G
E G N A R O K R
Y D E U L B C E
V L K N J P A Y
A O R U S T L E
N G E X A S B M
R O S E R E D I
D L A R E M E L
E S O R M I R P

The word peddler

By E. Yaghi

Every day regardless of the weather, sunshine or rain, summer or winter, the Word Peddler would rise at the break of dawn, wash, grab whatever he could find to eat and then take his box of words, place it on a red and white cart and leave his tiny one room hut to peddle his fare to people on the street.

"It's not as easy as some might think to sell words," the Peddler said to himself one bright spring morning as he pushed his little cart on the sidewalk which ran parallel to the mountain park. "People are much too busy these days to buy such commodities as words!"

But since he had no other way to make a living, he felt he had little choice. He stopped wheeling his vehicle and stood not too far from where his friend the coffee peddler had his stand of piping hot Arab coffee. "Alas," groaned the Word Peddler, "even the coffee peddler is better off than me. Folks come from all over Amman to drink his hot beverage and exchange greetings and gossip. But who will buy my words today?"

Just then he saw a newspaper man park his van near the word cart. As the delivery man descended and walked towards him, the Word Peddler said in a polite voice: "Good morning, sir. Would you care to purchase some words today?"

The man halted and stared at him in apparent disgust and retorted: "Now why should I do such a stupid thing as that? I sell newspapers, not buy words! I really don't care if anyone reads these papers anyway as long as I get paid. But I am going to get me a nice cup of hot coffee!"

So he sauntered over to the coffee stand and began to guzzle down the thick liquid. He stood for a while talking to the sunburnt coffee man. They both turned their heads towards the Word Peddler. They pointed at his dishevelled and ragged pants and his ragged shoes, his unkempt hair and his unshaven face and burst into laughter. The Word Peddler felt like melting into the pavement but instead mustered up his courage and chanted to some passersby: "Words for sale. Come and get some fresh words. Any size you want, I have all kinds, long words, short words, words that sing and words that weep. They come in all different colours and styles. Come and look!"

Out of curiosity some did venture over to peek into his word box but bought nothing. Others replied: "Who wants to buy words? No one has time to read. We subscribe to the newspaper so we can look at the comics and advertisements." And they too laughed and passed the Word Peddler to hurry on to the coffee man for a cup of his hot ware.

The day had just begun and already the Word Peddler was heartbroken. "How am I to live if I can't peddle any words? What will I do? How can I afford to eat? It's been ages since I bought new clothes and so long since I had a good pair of shoes!" He groaned as his mouth twisted in despair while he tried to blink back his feelings but some tears trickled down his unshaven face and he said in a hoarse voice: "Now the little children have seen me crying!"

A small boy approached him and said: "Hey, mister, don't be sad. Take this shilling for you!" and before the Word Peddler could protest, the boy dropped the single coin into the Word Peddler's hand and ran off to school.

Just when he was really enjoying feeling sorry for himself, he saw a tiny child about to be hit by a speeding car. He left his word cart and rushed into the street nearly getting hit himself and swung the child into his arms and carried him to the other side of the pavement. To the youngster he said firmly, "Son, you must watch those cars. They move very fast and can't see short things like yourself. Be more careful!"

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, April 22

8:30 Zorro

Another character tries to impersonate Zorro with the arrangement of the Alcalde, to make Zorro appear as bad and evil. Finally, Zorro discovers the conspiracy.

9:10 Quantum Leap

Sam leaps into time to find himself in the place of a famous wrestler who fights for a noble cause to build a church as well as to help the poor and the needy.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Feature Film — The Portrait

Starring: Gregory Peck and Loren Bacal

Different events and surprises occur when Maggy, a painter and the daughter of a retired poetry professor, pays a visit to her parents.

Friday, April 23

8:30 Billy

David gets into trouble when he goes to see a concert and is driven home by the police. His mother decides to punish him.

9:10 E.N.G.

Anne's birthday is on the way, so the employees at Channel 10 decide to record a tape gathering each employee's memory at the station from the time Anne had been there, as a surprise gift.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Wagner

Wagner, who is on the top list of wanted revolutionaries, moves to Venice, which was ruled by Austria at that time.

Saturday, April 24

8:30 Super Bloopers And New Practical Jokes

A local talk show prepared and presented by Mureed Hammad.

9:30 Saturday Variety Show

10:00 News in English

10:20 Feature Film — Trench-coat In Paradise

Starring: Dirk Benedict and Sydney Walsh

This is a film involving a number of murders. A company manager hires an investigator to search into the murder of his friend Robert in Honolulu.

Sunday, April 25

8:30 Executive Stress

Starring: Penelope Keith and Peter Bowles.

Jessica invites a number of guests to a party which she has prepared with a friend. But the problem starts when one of the guests gets sick because of the food Jessica prepared.

9:10 The Good Guys Missing

10:00 News in English

10:20 Voltaire

Voltaire is invited by King Frederick to live in Prussia because he is continuously mistreated in France. King Frederick is angered by Voltaire when the composer tries to escape and smuggle his money out to Switzerland.

Monday, April 26

8:30 The Powers That Be

Having a Bath
Starring: John Forsythe, Holland Taylor

Senator Powers is invited to join the official ceremony for President Clinton.

9:10 Documentary — Dinosaur

Tale Of A Tooth
This documentary investigates the life of the extinct dinosaur. The search begins when a British scientist from Oxford discovers an unusual tooth in shape and size.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Jordan Weekly

10:40 Street Justice

Sanctuary
A maid escapes from her employer's house because of mistreatment and abuse. The employer also accused her of stealing \$3,000.

Tuesday, April 27

8:30 Bandler About

This comedy is a collection of hilarious actions and funny situations including a truck driver at work as well as foul ups of a man and his wife at a gas station and many more.

9:10 Forever Green

The family discovers a skeleton in the backyard. It is suspected that the skeleton was once to one of the warriors in the British Civil War of the 17th century.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Feature Film

And What Shall We Do For A King
Thieves steal a quantity of jewels and money which accidentally come into the hands of Tom.

9:00 Spotlight
9:30 Documentary — Voyager

Flight From The Volcano
An exciting trip by air gliders at various altitudes over the volcanoes in Ecuador.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Mini-Series — 2000 Malibu Road

Perry, the lawyer, is raped. Lindsey makes it as an actress and gets to Hollywood, and Jade awaits the verdict after being accused of murder.



David Bowie

David Bowie makes another surprise turn with new album

By Dean Goodman
Reuter

BEVERLY HILLS, California (R) — Never one to stick with a musical genre for too long, David Bowie is taking a break from his hard rock band Tin Machine and releasing his first solo album in six years.

While many rockers of his generation rely on tried and true formulas to sustain concert attendance and record sales, the ever progressive Bowie is not afraid to test the limits even if plenty of fans fall by the wayside.

His new album *Black Tie White Noise* (Savage/BMG) finds him reworking past his relatively tame albums of the last decade such as 1983's *Let's Dance*, and picking up where his experimental, avant-garde works of the late 1970s left off.

"It's sort of very far removed from aggressive guitar format, and it really opened the avenues up for me to become more involved in wind instruments which I've always had a hankering for," Bowie told Reuters in a recent interview.

"The saxophone and the trumpet, the horn lineups generally, going back to my first idol Little Richard and his band — it was such a great part of that rock 'n' roll spirit."

From somewhere behind a thick cloud of cigarette smoke, Bowie's eyes light up as he waxes lyrical about those days. Sharply dressed as usual in a dark blue suit, and looking much younger than his 46 years, the relaxed Bowie laughs a lot.

From a commercial and critical viewpoint, he hasn't had much to be happy about in recent years. Revered since the late 1960s for pioneering an eclectic range of musical styles — among them "glam rock", new age, "white soul" and punk — Bowie realised his days at the cutting edge of music are gone.

After *Let's Dance*, whose throwaway hit songs *China Girl*, *Modern Love* and the title track turned him into a mainstream MTV hero and *Time* magazine cover story, he released two albums that flopped.

"I don't know what happened there," he laughs, referring to the albums *Tonight* (1984) and *Never Let Me Down* (1986). "I was getting so totally indifferent about things at that time. It wasn't a very pleasant period for me."

Indeed one distraction then was the death of his mentally ill half-brother Terry Burns who jumped under a train in 1985. Reporters queries about Terry used to result in a premature end to the interview, but since Terry is the subject of the new album's first single *Jump They Say*, Bowie has no

choice but to talk about him.

As his eyes moisten and he glances at the floor, Bowie recalls how he virtually ignored Terry after becoming a star because they shared similar traits, and he thus felt both an empathy and a repulsion towards him.

He credits his Ethiopian-born wife Iman, a famous model whom he married last year, for helping him make peace with that and several other dark incidents in his life.

"Now, just as he used to shed stage personas overnight, he has now shed his own persona — that of the remote, protected rock star. He has learned to take the good days with the bad, and to learn from new experiences."

"I just feel as now there's a human being (in me) and I'm kind of coming into my own, feeling that I have some degree of balance in my life now," Bowie says, his smile returning.

Iman can also claim the credit for the new album. Bowie needed to compose music for the wedding ceremony that wouldn't offend either her Muslim family or his Protestant family.

The result forms the basis of the album's opener *Wedding Song* — a lengthy, quirky, sax-driven instrumental recalling his musical experiments on the seminal Brian Eno-produced trilogy of *Low* (1977), *Heroes* (1977), and *Lodger* (1979).

"That song really became a watershed," Bowie says. "I wanted to write down my impressions somehow or other, put them to music, of the last few years."

While more recent fans may be perplexed by the album's muffled lyrics, jazzy textures and oddball versions of Cream and Morrissey songs, the long-suffering older fans can probably breathe a sigh of relief. But maybe not for too long, because Bowie plans to bring Tin Machine back together again.

Bowie is immensely proud of this nattily attired, bard rock quartet in which the superstar claims unconvincedly to be an equal alongside three relative unknowns.

Critical acclaim for the band's 1989 self-titled debut, which Bowie reckons is one of the best albums of the late 1980s, failed to translate into sales. The follow-up died quickly despite publicity over the naked Greek statues on the cover. Last year's live effort was barely noticed.

"It's going to take a long time before it has any acceptability factor because the components are so odd," Bowie says. "In a perfect world, if you could dismiss all that and just listen to the album without any kind of association, it would have been taken as a very different kind of thing."

Debbie Gibson stays squeaky clean in pop music mire

By Dean Goodman
Reuter

LOS ANGELES — As X-rated lyrics and concert riots become more common in the pop music world, one young singer is proudly wading through the carnage with her squeaky-clean image intact.

In fact not many singers can claim to be tragically uncool and then go on to sell millions of albums to fickle youngsters. But 22-year-old Debbie Gibson is a rarity.

In the 1980s she endured unkind comparisons with Madonna after finding fame as a precocious teen idol whose saccharine love songs, most of which she wrote and produced herself, exhaled the teenybopper set.

Gibson's three albums, beginning with *Out Of The Blue* in 1987, sold almost 10 million copies worldwide and put her in a league above fellow upstarts like Tiffany and Rick Astley who have now dropped out altogether.

In the 1990s as Madonna ditched her toyboy routine and explored the erotic, Gib-

son also branched out, winning critical acclaim for a stint in the Broadway production of *Les Miserables*.

But comparisons with Madonna end there. Gibson has never smoked, got drunk or taken drugs, she still lives at home and she believes in monogamy.

"I've got used to the fact that I'm never going to be as hip as *Arrested Development* or *Pearl Jam*. Twenty years from now I'll still be here and that's what's really important to me," Gibson told Reuters in a recent interview.

Gibson's fourth album *Body Mind Soul* hit the shops on Jan. 19. Most of the 11 songs are vintage Gibson — upbeat breezy pop tunes dealing in love that's either going well or going badly.

One of the more adventurous tracks *Shock Your Mama* marks Gibson's foray into rhythm 'n' blues, coming with a sampled lyric from Aretha Franklin and two raps. But Gibson insists she has no ambitions in that direction.

"It was a pretty isolated thing. There are too many

people who do that so well," she said.

Alternating between disarming honesty and giggly lightheartedness, Gibson doesn't worry about image or marketing herself as a cool chick.

"I definitely feel different at 22 than I did at 16 so whatever comes of that will be the image. I don't really put too much time and effort into planning that out because you can't really second guess how people are going to respond, anyway, so you may as well just be yourself."

She also has a healthy grasp of who her fans are.

"They're rebellious not in the sense that they go out and do bad things, but that they rebel against the stereotype that young people are supposed to be into all kinds of illegal things or whatever," Gibson says.

"They're into my music and they take some heat for it I think, but that makes the audience stronger."

Three of the songs on *Body Mind Soul* do confront more serious issues. When I Say

No deals with the problems girls may have in finding niff pushy guys who want a little more than just a dinner date or a kiss on the doorstep.

Tear Down These Walls implores people to see past racial and sexual preference barriers, while *Kisses For One* preaches the virtues of monogamy in the world of AIDS.

"That's from experience just in the sense that I've always believed in that (monogamy) anyway. From a young age I've always seen marriage as a goal and I was never like into sleeping around," Gibson says.

Somehow Gibson manages to avoid falling into the "nerd" category, perhaps because she is professionally astute and knows what she wants. In this regard she cites Elton John, Billy Joel, Barbra Streisand and Beate Midler as role models.

On the few occasions when she's not writing songs, she's putting together plans for a few musicals in the belief that Broadway currently needs a



Debbie Gibson

fresh infusion of ideas.

In the short term though, Gibson plans a full concert tour in the summer after

playing a few promotional concerts in America, Europe and Japan to promote the new album.

Michael Palin helps stammering children

By Stephen Brown
Reuter

LONDON — British comedy actor Michael Palin, who stammered his way through the box-office hit *A Fish Called Wanda*, is trying to help children afflicted with the speech impediment.

Palin, a member of the cult Monty Python comedy troupe which made wacky, voices and funny walks its trademark, does not stammer himself, but has given his name and support to Britain's first, specialist centre for

stammering children.

Stammering — or stuttering as it is also called — affects one in a hundred people in Britain and five per cent of people stammer at some stage in their childhood. Men are four times as likely to stammer as women.

Speech experts say it is even more widespread in the highly vocal United States, competitive Japan and among polyglot immigrants from the Indian subcontinent.

"Although 80 per cent of children who stammer could

be helped, specialised treatment is scarce," said Palin at the opening of the Michael Palin Centre for Stammering Children in Finchbury, London, earlier this month.

If left untreated, stammering is likely to get worse and can cause irreparable damage to a child's intellectual and emotional development, Palin said.

What causes stammering?

In some cases it is nervous tension locking the vocal cords, other people have difficulty coordinating speech muscles and some find their

speech affected by brain or neurological damage.

"It's different in each person," said Lena Rustin, founder of the centre. "What we do know is that the predisposition is inherited."

Chris Cox, trustee of Britain's Association For Stammerers, knows the suffering of the child teased in the playground, and in adult life the knot in the stomach when the telephone rings, the sweating palms when ordering drinks at the pub.

"The trouble is, you don't look any different and when

suddenly this funny sound starts coming out, people don't know what to do," said Mr. Cox, who has stammered since childhood.

The association advises people to warn their audience that they stammer and say: "Don't worry if I run into trouble, normal service will be resumed as soon as possible."

But stammerers often find they can speak fluently in unison — they are told to repeat their wedding vows together with the priest — and when speaking foreign

languages.

"I know a French lady who only stammers in English," said Mr. Cox. Many doctors still tell parents there is no way to stop their children stammering. The communications problem can make parents anxious and their children badly behaved or withdrawn.

The Michael Palin Centre runs six-session courses for toddlers, teaching them and their parents to speak more slowly, maintain eye contact, and use words the child can understand.

From protest to escapism in the 'new' South Africa

By Matt Wolf
The Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG — The Market Theatre, once home to South Africa's most fiery and urgent drama, is doing its best business of late with a genteel British tearjerker.

In Cape Town, the searing "Playland" about black-white relations closed two weeks early — despite international acclaim for the newest work from dramatist Athol Fugard.

The commercial sector finds the bland drawing the crowds, whether it's farce — *Uproar In The House* and *The Earl And The Pussycat* — or a synthetic musical tribute to Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice.

Up and down the country, the message is the same. While theatre may have been one of South Africa's major exports throughout the troubled apartheid era, these days escapism is the event.

Besieged by soaring violence and crime and a crumbling economy, the white minority — traditionally the theatre going mainstay — wants escape, not reportage, from its entertainment. The black majority has yet to be initiated in any large-scale way into the theatre, preferring the mostly American im-

ports that crop up nightly on television.

In the struggle against apartheid, the theatre was both a source of information and a rallying-point for protest. Now, the approach of democracy has dissipated its impact, as has deep uncertainty about what precise shape any new government may take.

Changing political times, in other words, aren't necessarily good news for culture. The theatre finds itself facing an ideological enemy in retreat, performing for a dwindling white audience while the black public has yet to be fully tapped.

"Everybody's suffering a crisis in the theatre; there's no question," said Barney Simon, 39, artistic director of the nation's Banner Market Playhouse. "The Market is in transition just as the country is in transition."

Echoed producer Munnies Manin, a co-founder of the Market in 1976 who left 18 months ago to join Johannesburg's University of the Witwatersrand: "It's a real quandary; there's a tendency to find a new centre of gravity."

Before, it was an us-and-them kind (of theatre); it was very obvious what we were doing, filling a part of the media when the media was

very controlled."

Commercial impresario Pieter Toerien, South Africa's most successful independent producer, said the situation amounts to "survival of the fittest; people are very worried here."

"We have too few actors, too few directors," said Toerien, 48. "The theatre is rapidly dying in South Africa."

To a visitor, the dilemma is apparent on multiple fronts. Such places as the Market and Cape Town's Baxter struggle to adjust their socially conscious programming to an audience grown weary of what they perceive as agit-prop, or plays used for propaganda.

The Baxter, one-time home to brave mixed-race productions of classics and new plays, has of late hosted a long-running staging of the camp musical, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

At the Market, the bracing *Playland* was performed last summer in a disappointing 75 per cent of so of capacity, while William Nicholson's tearful English import, *Shadowlands*, played to near-capacity.

"The problem in this country is that so many people in this country see anything black as political; what whites

call 'protest theatre' often is just black reality," Simon said.

Elsewhere, the state-funded arts complexes face a potentially grim fate if a future government decides — as various critics have charged — that they constitute so many "apartheid dinosaurs."

Funded over the years by white governments to mount shows for a white audience, these centres must attract the nation's black majority — or risk extinction.

Thus, in Johannesburg's multiracial Hillbrow district, drama administrator for the Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal (PACT) Peter Terry watches rehearsals for a black play, *Yamina*, unsure whether its intended audience will come to watch it.

"You can't wave a wand and suddenly everyone is going to go to the theatre," said Terry, who began his career as an actor.

"I'm sure we're seen as Eurocentric and elitist. (But) to destroy the arts councils for the sake of revenge is for me a very shortsighted move. There's so much expertise contained within them."

In the commercial sector, a dwindling hand of producers chase an increasingly small public whose taste has in turn

been affected by a decade-long cultural boycott.

The country that produced such lasting theatre artists as composer Mbongeni Ngema (*Sarafina*), actress Janet Suzman (*A Dry White Season*) and Fugard musicals offers up mostly unchallenging English imports, from *The Rocky Horror Show* and *Shirley Valentine* to the thriller *The Woman In Black* and Ray Cinnery's farce, *It Runs In The Family*.

Even as Cape Town readies the South African premiere of *Hair* — a musical a quarter-of-a-century old — provocative American plays like John Guare's 1990 *Six Degrees Of Separation* flop because the public cannot accept it.

"Expectations are lowered; the audience skills are reduced," said Barry Ronge, arts editor of Johannesburg's *Sunday Times*, which has a readership of three million.

"The theatre doesn't operate within any framework. There's been a generational void in the passing on of traditional theatrical skills."

The situation is made bleaker by a shared belief that the country continues to need the theatre.

"Essentially, there's no question we have to continue to work, to make stories about where we live so other

people are aware of where we live," said the Market's Simon.

He added, "I suppose I think if theatre has a function, it's moving human beings into empathy, getting people to understand more about one another."

"This is the time when the country should be listening to messages. Otherwise, this country could turn upside down," said Ngema, whose new musical, *Magic At 4 A.M.*, opened in Johannesburg on April 21.

Black actor John Kani, 49, a co-star of *Playland* and a 1975 Tony winner (with Winston Ntshona) for his Broadway performances in *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead* and *The Island*, argued that the theatre's mission does not die with apartheid.

"People must not think we're involved in a theatre of political conscience simply because we had a white enemy," he said. "We did it because the government was wrong, and if the next government is wrong, we will continue doing that."

"We remain the thermometer that gauges the feeling of our people — the conscience of a government, the watchdog of that government. ... There is much work to be done."

British talent for sloppy dressing hits catwalks

By Jill Serjeant
Reuter

LONDON — They look as if they've spent the night on a park bench after raiding the secondhand clothes store — they're dedicated followers of grunge fashion and proud of it.

After years of being derided and ignored as typical British sloppy dressing, grunge has crossed the seas and found a place on the catwalks of Europe and America's leading designers.

"Dressing down has been a big part of British street fashion since the mid-1980s.

Then American and Italian designers picked up on it and realised they could make good money out of it," said Wayne Hemingway, managing director of rebel British fashion house Red Or Dead.

"You are supposed to look like you have been dragged through a hedge backwards. It is a great test of personal style," he said.

Grunge could only have come from Britain.

Young Britons turned a natural talent for dressing down into a look that has hitherto been too cheap for the chic French and too bitty

for the Italians.

Often strapped for cash in this recession-hit island, teenagers began throwing together disparate items culled from charity shops, mixing slashed jeans with cut-off grandad waistcoats and working boots with flowery skirts and faded striped t-shirts.

The downbeat anti-fashion look that started off costing next to nothing is now selling for hundreds of dollars in reworked versions by houses such as Italy's Dolce Gabbana, and New York's Perry Ellis.

"Thrifty-shop style was once a British specialty but now everybody is into second-hand rose," said London fashion writer Suzy Menkes.

Not surprisingly, British designers are somewhat miffed at finding their home-grown look embraced with such fervour by foreigners after being disparaged on their own soil for so long.

"Giving the Americans credence for this is doing British fashion no favours whatsoever. Britain's Helen Storey bravely put grunge on the catwalk for the first time about three years ago but has

not been recognised for it," said Mr. Hemingway.

Britain earns around £2 billion (\$2.90 billion) a year in clothing exports, with designer merchandise accounting for £160 million (\$232 million) of that.

But last week's London fashion week was noticeable more for the exodus of top British designers such as Vivienne Westwood, Katharine Hamnett and Rifat Ozbek to the more prestigious catwalks of Paris or Milan.

One London newspaper dubbed it "fashion week" in which Britain's native flair

for inverted snobbery reached a new height in some collections featuring rough knits and hob-nail boots.

Grunge sprang up as an anti-fashion statement in the post-punk rock era of mid-1980s Britain, partly as a reaction to "Dallas-style" shoulder pads and glamour of mainstream designers.

Instead of fading away, the fashion for dressing down spread through British youth culture. The term grunge was coined in 1989 after the explosion of loud heavy rock "grunge" music in the American northwest city of Seattle.

India's kidney market thrives in slum colony

By Krishnan Guruswamy
The Associated Press

MADRAS, India — When Samuel Jayakodi's kidneys failed, doctors told the math teacher he could survive only on a dialysis machine or if he found a new kidney.

Choosing the second option was easy.

Dozens of people offered to sell him a kidney. They came from "kidney colony," a ghetto of this south Indian city where many people are willing to part with a kidney for enough money to start a business, pay dowries for sisters or daughters, or finance gambling or drinking habits.

"I paid 15,000 rupees (\$500) for a kidney and 50,000 rupees (\$1,660) for the operation...but I've got a new life," Mr. Jayakodi said. Mani Vijay Kumar, 27, who owns a bicycle repair shop, said he sold a kidney to buy more bicycles for renting.

"The money I get every month isn't enough even for myself," he said outside his shop, built of scraps of wood from crates. "I have two daughters and a sister to be married."

More people sell kidneys to strangers in India than in

any other country, according to a report in 1993 by the U.N. Commission on Human Rights.

Patients from developed countries also search for donors in such Third World countries as India, where there are kidney markets in Bombay and New Delhi.

"Much of the demand comes from developed countries, and there is the lure of remuneration for potential suppliers from developing countries," according to the U.N. report.

India plans to introduce legislation this year that would permit doctors to remove organs from cadavers. Until that is passed, people suffering kidney failure must get a replacement from a relative or buy one.

The draft law also would regulate the sale of organs by living donors to prevent them being cheated, according to Bupinder Singh Lamba, a Health Ministry official.

Like many other buyers, Mr. Jayakodi the teacher relied on kidney peddlers, most of whom work in hospitals, and a donor from Villiwakkam, the slum on the outskirts of Madras known as "kidney colony."

The lure of collecting hun-

dreds of dollars for a kidney has caused about 200 people in the slum, 40 per cent of its population, to become donors.

During a walk through "kidney colony," it was hard to find families that had not sold at least one kidney in recent years.

Senthil Thiagarajan, 40, one of the first donors, sold his kidney in 1987 for 10,000 rupees, then worth slightly more than \$900.

His brother Murthy said Senthil lost the money on horse races, then forced his wife, Rajathi, to sell one of her kidneys. With the money, she opened a shop that buys trash and sells it to recyclers.

Rajendran, a 17-year-old who gave only his first name, said, "I won't sell my kidney for making a fast buck." But as he spoke, his mother wondered aloud how she would pay her share of a younger sister's dowry.

"Even if he got a regular job, we will need at least 30,000 rupees (\$970) to conduct the marriage," she said.

"The only way out is to sell our kidneys."

Half of India's kidney transplants are done in six Madras hospitals. That has made the city a major centre

for buying and selling the organs.

Dr. K.C. Reddy, a urologist at the private Pandalar Clinic, has performed 1,000 transplants and sees nothing unethical about selling kidneys.

"Nobody is forcing a person to give his kidney," he said. "The decision is voluntary, but the result is monetarily beneficial."

Dr. Reddy said removal of a kidney is an easy operation that carries little or no risk if patients are carefully screened.

A person with one remaining kidney has to work harder to avoid infections, especially in the urinary tract, and drink a lot of fluids to keep the kidney flushed. The person does not need to take medicine or restrict normal activities.

But Dr. A.P. Pandey, head of the urology department at Christian Medical College in nearby Vellore, said some deaths result from transplants because doctors do not take enough precautions.

A study of 130 patients from the Middle East who received kidney transplants in Bombay hospitals over several years found that 25 died of infections.

S. Korean firms announce anti-cancer drugs

SEOUL (R) — Two South Korean companies said Friday they had developed anti-cancer drugs which clinical tests show are more effective and less toxic than the current world leaders.

Dong-A-Pharmaceutical Co. said its drug, DA-125, was at least 2.5 times more effective and had fewer side-effects than Adriamycin, an Italian drug which South Korean researchers said accounted for some 50 per cent of anti-cancer drugs worldwide.

"We believe DA-125 is a good substitute for Adriamycin," said Professor Kim Myong-Seok of the Seoul National University Hospital, who helped develop the

medicine.

Another firm, Sunkyoung Industries Co., said it had developed SKI-2053R, which it said killed six times more cancer cells in animal tests than existing medicines.

The two developments were announced at a recent symposium in Seoul on the development of new drugs.

Dong-A's share price rose 200 won 26 cents to 19,400 won (\$25) in active trade on the Seoul bourse, while SKI dropped 200 won to 20,000 won (\$26). Analysts said this was probably due to insiders taking profits on the news.

Dong-A's chief researcher, Kim Hu-Man, said nine years of trials and animal tests con-

ducted both at home and abroad showed DA-125 had solved many of the toxicity problems.

He said tests on dogs in Britain showed no side-effects except slight weight loss and a reduction of white blood corpuscles after 1.3 days of trials.

Adriamycin cannot be taken long-term because of its toxic side-effects.

Dong-A said it hoped to start manufacturing commercially if another two to three years of clinical experiments showed the same effect on humans as on animals.

Tests on humans will begin in 1995 or 1996, Prof. Kim said.

"We will start commercial

production only after these tests really prove it to be more effective and less toxic than other medicines available now," he said.

SKI said it had already applied for approval for human tests of SKI-2053R and hoped to market the drug by 1996 after clinical tests in hospitals.

The company described the drug as a third-generation platinum complex, which it said was up to three times more effective than comparable drugs currently available.

Dong-A is backed by research funds from the South Korean government, which has funnelled 200 million won (\$260,000) into the project.

IMF cuts wreck Zimbabwe's health achievements

By Leonard Mavemeka

HARARE — The number of women dying in childbirth has doubled in Harare in the two years since Zimbabwe introduced the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) demanded by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

The alarming trend coincides with cuts in the health budget, the introduction of fees for maternity services, a decrease in qualified nursing staff and reduced availability of drugs.

The statistic, contained in a United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) report, is one of many showing the damaging impact of ESAP on Zimbabwe's health care — one of the country's greatest successes since independence in 1980. If the cuts continue in line with budget targets, it is predicted that all the health gains of the past decade will be reversed within two years.

Until the introduction of the adjustment programme in October 1990, Zimbabwe's health achievements were held up as a model for the region. Infant mortality fell from 140 per 1,000 live births, in 1980 to 50 in 1989, largely as a result of a massive government commitment to improving primary health care.

Priority was given to providing clean water and public sanitation, inoculating children and raising the standard of living in what the government termed "growth with equity." Free health and education were provided for those earning less than \$26 a month, which at the time was close to the poverty line.

Rural areas, long neglected before independence, saw the rebuilding of 450 health centres destroyed during the war and 321 new ones constructed. Zimbabwe achieved the highest rate of contraceptive use in Africa: 43 per cent against 5 per cent for the rest of the continent. But since the introduction of fees in 1991, people are making fewer visits to hospitals and clinics. At Harare Central Hospital, for example, bed occupancy fell from 5,766 in December 1990 to 4,795 in December 1991, a drop of almost 17 per cent.

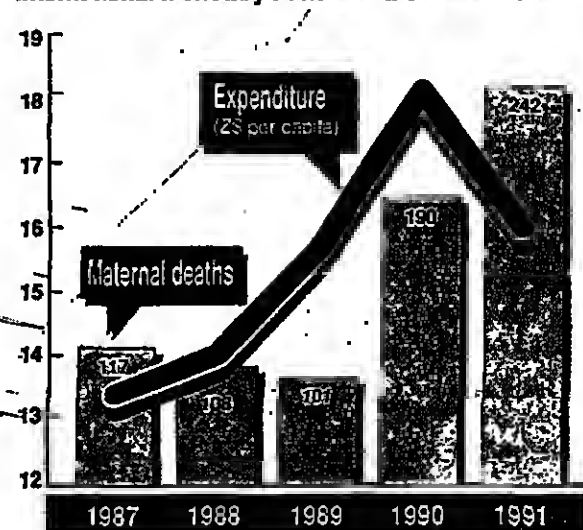
With, for instance, a routine ultrasound scan now costing pregnant women \$14, it is little wonder that the number of babies delivered outside hospitals has risen sharply. And, for the first time since independence, there are no guaranteed jobs for new graduates of the school of nursing, despite an acute shortage of qualified staff at almost every health centre.

According to a Harare neonatologist: "The cost-recovery exercise as applied to maternal and child health is likely to reverse all the achievements made in this area since independence."

Dr. Anne Renfrew sees a

Zimbabwe: deaths follow health cuts

The number of women dying in childbirth has doubled in Harare since Zimbabwe submitted to Economic Structural Adjustment Programme demanded by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.



In 1989, the last full year before the programme imposed cuts in health spending, 101 maternal deaths were recorded. Two years later, the total leapt to 242.



SPANOS M 42

similar pattern emerging in the rural area served by her hospital at St. Paul's Mission, 75 kilometres from the capital. Since the introduction of fees, the number of maternity cases at her hospital has fallen by a third, she says.

"During 1991, we frequently had all the beds in the adult ward full, with extra patients lying on the floor on mattresses. Now the wards are half full." X-rays are down by more than 40 per cent, laboratory tests by almost 28 per cent.

Under its social development fund, introduced as a safety net to alleviate the harsh effects of ESAP, the government says those earning below \$26 a month can receive free medical attention. But there is a catch. Those seeking to benefit must provide a certificate issued by a social worker or employer showing income level — but these are difficult for the rural poor to obtain because social workers are usually based in cities.

And the level at which entitlement has been set is low: \$26 is no longer close to the poverty line in a land where inflation has rocketed by more than 45 per cent since ESAP was introduced and an estimated 60-70 per cent of the population now lives in poverty.

But the newly expensive medical system is only one part of a worsening public health picture. Other measures taken under ESAP have lowered the living standards of the poor majority of the population, already suffering from the impact of HIV infection and the worst drought of the century. The devalued currency, high inflation, removal of price controls and minimum wage regulations in many sectors of the economy, along with rising unemployment, all render the poor more vulnerable to

bunger and illness.

Health cuts and removal of food subsidies are starting to bite, with increases recorded in malnutrition and diseases such as tuberculosis, which had all but been eradicated. Eight years after the last cholera outbreak claimed 39 lives, 109 people died of the disease last year. Increasingly

unsanitary conditions make a further outbreak more likely and potentially more devastating.

Zimbabweans are suffering terribly for the economic orthodoxies imposed by the IMF and World Bank. For many of them, the real cost of "adjustment" is death — Panos features.

SOLUTIONS

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. SLANDER is spoken defamation of character (defamation in transient form). LIBEL is written and published (defamation in a permanent form). A TAMBOLA is a kind of lottery with fancy articles for prizes. (Often the rotating barrel that mixes the raffle tickets).
2. TOMBOLO — a bar or spit which joins an island to the mainland or two islands.
3. The motions of the heart (by tracing a curve on paper).
4. Soldiers fitted their shields together to make a solid canopy and flanks to protect them when they attacked city walls. This resembled the tortoise shell in its appearance and purpose.
5. Fine, calm weather conditions, although in winter fog is likely to develop.
6. ".....The shepherd's delight, but a red sky in the morning, is the shepherd's warning."
7. Medicine. A vessel for holding liquids, especially drinks; formerly variously applied, now usually a small glass bottle, especially for liquid medicine.
8. TIN PAN ALLEY is the name given to a district occupied by composers and publishers of popular music. Refers, in England, to Denmark Street, London.
9. Two mirrors are set so that the reflecting surfaces are exactly parallel with each other. They are arranged at an angle of 45 degrees to the axis of the tube. The light rays enter an aperture opposite one mirror and are reflected down the tube to the second mirror. This in turn sends the rays directly to the eye at the bottom aperture of the tube.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

PUZZLES

The fifteen colours are: Black, carmine, gold, emerald, primrose, orange, blue, sage, rust, rose, grey, red, pink, lime, navy.

Japan sets gene therapy rules for AIDS and cancer

TOKYO (R) — Japan has set guidelines for the first time on clinical research into gene therapy as a way of fighting AIDS and cancer, a Health Ministry official said.

"Since 1990 when the United States first tried gene therapy on lethal genes, there has been increasing work on gene therapy," an advisory panel to the health and welfare minister said in the

guidelines.

"As gene therapy could become an epoch-making technology in the 21st century, we have worked out guidelines to promote appropriate research on the therapy."

Under the guidelines, the research is limited to lethal genes and diseases for which gene therapy is more effective, such as cancer and

AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome).

Gene therapy is a controlled, experimental treatment designed to introduce new genes into the body to correct an inherited or acquired condition.

The guidelines ban research aimed at manipulating reproductive cells, a process which could affect succeeding generations.

They require a series of checks on procedures, including telling patients of the risks involved, and allowing the treatment to stop at any time.

The guidelines also suggest that an investigative council of legal and medical experts should assess the safety of any procedures before their application.

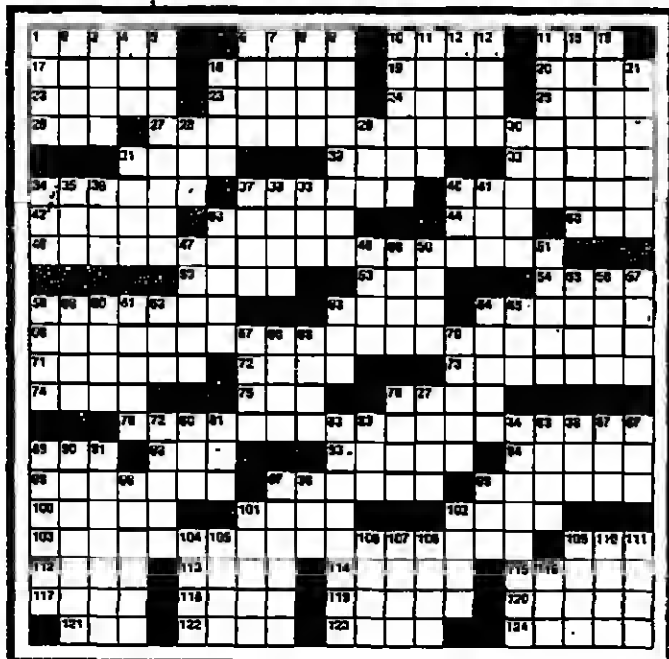
WEEKEND CROSSWORD

LETTERS FROM GREECE

By Raymond Hameel

ACROSS
1 West Indies native
5 Bird
10 Tilt event
14 Knockout count
17 — Lie ft.
18 Poem division
19 Lamp's norm de
20 Lullaby
21 Way out
22 Get up
23 "Go to" (Housman)
24 Hilarious
25 Cards on
26 "Cheers"
27 Star Wars flyer
28 "With 10161"
29 Greek
30 "My friends"
31 "My friends"

DOWN
1 Ready money
2 Charles' dog
3 General's title
4 Charged particle
5 City ft'd by the
6 Donut
7 Winding
8 Drift
9 "Gentle" (Housman)
10 "Gentle" (Housman)
11 "Gentle" (Housman)
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31 "Gentle" (Housman)



Last Week's Cryptograms

1. Able potato farmer could grow nothing but weeds on his newly purchased farm in the country.
2. Are well-wishers akin to Americans et al. who check coins into a famous Italian fountain's waters?
3. The friend's jolly week ended in Fourth of July fireworks.
4. Politics often involves your blaming the other man for everything you possibly can.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. LEND GRFSYT DOWDYL FEW WAFY.
LGRHSE EFOHAW WESDWYEN COW
WE CROW.

—By Ed Huddleston

2. QUOGENT HIPAGE BALL GONENST UX
DEGLDNYX GQ WNE WIRN YGBAPRGIX
DUES.

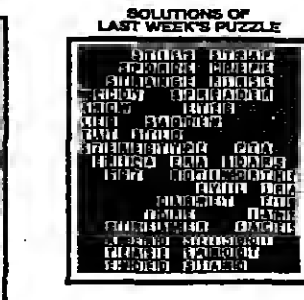
—By Frank N. Stein

3. JZZA LIKSNYT LAPQMY IZSP LXZSMT
LQPOF WZJJKLUVL EVO QLPQ K LUWXP
XLPQOZVTW.

—By Rita Salvato

4. FRBDNEB O HBZZ LGGX QGCVE CM
FOJVBH ZHCJRZOH QBJGCBK Z CZLOJ
JZHEBW WHZDEKHWODL CB WC
BNBHFREB.

—By Eugene T. Malachuk



Diagramless

21 x 21, By James Berwick

ACROSS
1 The brook
5 Shopping
6 Container
7 Ability
9 Biting
11 Devise
13 Had on
15 Most bad
17 Excavation
19 American Indian
21 Book's intro-
duction abbr

DOWN
1 Kind of sale
15 Lake out west
18 Upperclassman
19 Furry fellow
20 Lullaby
21 Torte
22 Exercise session
23 Eaten one
24 Judge
26 Flamingo
28 Ram's cry

30 Japanese money
31 Lament
32 The Buckeye
33 State
34 Oklahoma city
35 Cake
36 Burn
37 Father
38 Crossed a
stream, in a way
39 Inferring
40 Legless creature
41 Annoy

42 Disproving
43 Print measures
44 Minor
45 Fast talk
46 Parmed
47 Lake's desert
48 Crawl
49 Aircraft with
antennas

50 Barrel parts
51 Boring
52 Field cover
53 Lawn or
Gershwin
54 Master
55 Harbor town
56 Give off
57 Sash

Multi-party panel recommends Sharia as law in Somalia

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — A committee drafting a constitution for Somalia, which has been without government for more than two years of civil war, has recommended that Islamic laws (Sharia) be the basis for all Somalia laws.

The proposal came from a sub-committee of the transitional charter drafting committee, comprising 15 factions which began work at the weekend, a spokesman for the U.N. Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) said here Wednesday.

Somalia is a Muslim country where most people belong to the Sunni branch of Islam.

UNOSOM spokesman Adishwar Padarath said another committee handling property disputes was considering May 15 as the date for notifying all Somalis inside and outside the country about all illegally owned property should be restored.

The injunction would cover the period from independence in 1960 until now, with special attention paid to cases since 1991, when civil war broke out after the collapse of the Mohammed Siad Barre dictatorship.

Many dwellings in the capital and elsewhere have been taken over by squatters of various sorts, including displaced persons and refugees and clan combatants.

The two committees would up their first session Wednesday and are due to resume work Sunday, the spokesman said.

In other developments: The press office of the American-led United Task Force reported that a woman corporal with the Canadian contingent had her nose broken in a stone-throwing incident at a Mogadishu market Monday and might need surgery.

Youths often throw stones at UNATF patrols and vehicles and sometimes try to snatch their weapons. Some UNATF units have put barbed wire on their vehicles.

At Baidoa, 200 kilometres northwest of the capital, a Somali accused of "spying" for Mr. Siad Barre, toppled in January 1991, was stoned to death, the U.N. spokesman said.

Chief warlord General Mohammad Farah Aidede returned to Mogadishu Tuesday after more than a month abroad. After attending last month's national reconciliation conference in neighbouring Ethiopia,

he visited Sudan — which has strict sharia laws — Uganda and Yemen, his radio station said.

In Ottawa, opposition leaders Tuesday accused Defence Minister Kim Campbell, the favourite to succeed Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, of covering up the beating death of a Somali in the custody of Canadian troops in Somalia.

Five soldiers were arrested on homicide charges following the March 16 death of a Somali man who was caught entering the Canadian compound in Belet Huen, but the arrests were not made public in Canada until two weeks later.

"The minister kept this information from the people of Canada," deputy Liberal leader Sheila Copps told parliament.

"Canadian officials treated this as homicide and soldiers are being investigated under that charge," said New Democrat John Brewin. "It is now clear that the minister knew about it a day after it happened and aided and abetted the cover-up."

But Harvie Andre, Conservative leader in the House of Commons, replied that "there is nothing to cover up and the military is investigating through its judicial system."

"(The opposition) is digging...looking for dirt where it does not exist," he said.

A Defence Ministry spokesman said the arrested soldiers were flown back to Canada for investigation and a corporal who attempted suicide was being treated in hospital.

The ministry also disclosed that three military police investigators were sent to Belet Huen Saturday to investigate another shooting that occurred on March 4 when two Somalis entered the Canadian compound and one was shot dead.

In Bonn, Chancellor Helmut Kohl's cabinet formally approved Wednesday sending 1,600 troops on a humanitarian mission to Somalia, in the German army's first foreign deployment outside the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) region, government officials said.

But only a day after the three coalition parties endorsed the decision, controversy flared, with reports that German experts secretly consider the mission a spectacle to dazzle the public. The troops, mainly engineers and technicians and an armed



Somali women queue up in front of a Mogadishu feeding centre (AFP photo)

force to defend them, will be dispatched in late June to help the second phase of the United Nations operation in Somalia, and will be stationed in an already-pacified region.

But reliable sources said that the government had already been told in a secret report that the mission would be superfluous except as an exercise to impress public opinion.

The report was made to an inter-ministerial group by a German diplomat, who visited potential deployment areas in northern Somalia after the Somalia peace conference in Addis Ababa and concluded that German troops would be wasting their time there, they said.

In Mogadishu, UNOSOM II spokesman Keith Oliver said the world body was delighted by the Germans' final decision.

"The U.N. welcomes the decision. It immensely delights us to note that senior members of the world community take the lead in joining hands to help a situation such as this," Mr. Oliver told

Reuters. Other senior U.N. officials said the Germans may have had reservations about the mandate given to soldiers serving in UNOSOM II to apply all necessary force if anyone obstructed their work.

"This mandate, which allows the use of force, including shooting to kill, may not have been very comforting. But we are glad they will join and help save this country," one official said.

Heavy rains in southern Somalia have forced the suspension of the repatriation of refugees from Kenya and slowed famine relief operations, U.N. officials said.

UNATF spokesman Colonel Fred Peck said plans to send 2,500 refugees from the northern Kenyan town of Al Wak back to their homes in the southern Gedo and Bardere regions were "indefinitely suspended."

"The roads are totally impassable and the rains only appear to be increasing," said Col. Peck.

Egypt offers reward for militants' capture

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt has offered a reward of \$15,000 for information leading to the arrests of Muslim militants, who Wednesday claimed an abortive assassination bid on a government minister.

The country's new interior minister, General Hassan Al Ali, said the offer was designed to "unite the efforts of the population and security services" to combat the militants.

Police will "protect informants and conceal their identity," he told the weekly Akhbar Al Hawadeth, offering the \$15,000 reward, the equivalent of 20 years of average wages for an Egyptian worker.

The underground Al Gamaa Al Islamiya, meanwhile, claimed responsibility for Tuesday's attack on Information Minister Sawfat Al Sherif in which he was cut by flying glass and his driver and bodyguard were shot and wounded.

A chief of its military wing, Mohammad Selim, was quoted in



Egyptian security forces seal off an area in a Cairo suburb in search of assailants who opened fire on Information Minister Sawfat Al Sherif on Tuesday (AFP photo)

Cairo newspapers as saying in a telephone call that the attack was carried out "in retaliation for recent statements" from the

minister. The fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood, which is tolerated by the authorities, condemned

the assassination bid and said such actions were "contrary to Islamic laws and forbidden by Islam."

Tens of thousands attend Ozal's funeral

ANKARA (Agencies) — Tens of thousands of people and delegations from 66 countries attended the state funeral here Wednesday of President Turgut Ozal in an atmosphere of remembrance.

More than 500,000 Turks had filed past his bier in an unbroken line starting Tuesday and going on through the night to Wednesday morning. It was only at 3 a.m. that the kilometre-long procession of mourners outside parliament began to thin out.

There were few tears. The collapse and death Saturday of their 66-year-old president with known heart problems came as no surprise.

There was a lot of respect on the quiet faces. Like Mr. Ozal, many were the grandchildren of peasants and the children of smalltime civil servants whose chance to share in power came with Ataturk's reforms in 1923 which established the modern re-

public. Like the founder, Mr. Ozal too had broken many taboos, and fellow Anatolians were proud of how he had redressed their marginalisation under the former Ottoman empire.

Many of the mourners standing under a light drizzle displayed a picture of the late president on their clothes while banners throughout the city read "Ozal, president elected by the people."

Sixty-six foreign delegations, including 10 presidents, paid their respects, bowing before the catafalque draped with Turkey's red flag with white crescent and star.

James Baker, the former secretary of state, was at the head of the delegation representing the United States at the funeral. Mr. Baker frequently visited Turkey during the Gulf crisis, when Mr. Ozal staunchly stood beside the allied coalition fighting Iraq.

Sharif launches mass campaign against ouster

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan (AFP) — To the cheers of thousands of supporters, Pakistan's ousted Premier Nawaz Sharif launched a nationwide campaign to regain power Wednesday as cracks began to appear in the newly-formed national union government.

Mr. Sharif boarded his Awami (People's) Express after urging Pakistanis to rise against "enemies of democracy and Pakistan."

More than 5,000 people, crowded onto the station platforms, denounced President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, who deposed Mr. Sharif earlier this week and dissolved parliament, ending a month-long power struggle.

The normally crowded markets in Rawalpindi, the former national capital, were closed, reflecting the wide support for Mr. Sharif among businessmen and traders. Emulating arch rival, former Premier Benazir Bhutto, who

undertook an abortive cross-country train campaign to oust Mr. Sharif in December, the 43-year-old deposed premier hopes to gain support of crowds en route.

His associates called the 270-kilometre train ride the beginning of a "crusade for democracy and progress."

In Karachi, Pakistan's Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FCCI) called for a nationwide strike Thursday to support Mr. Sharif and his sacked pro-business government.

Meanwhile in the capital, the first cracks appeared between Benazir Bhutto, who wants the immediate dissolution of four provincial assemblies, and new Prime Minister Balakh Sher Mazari.

"Suspicion is too strong but we find they are not moving fast enough," explained a spokesman for Ms. Bhutto's leftist Pakistan People's Party (PPP).

Rabin to visit Russia

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin will "in the near future" become the first Israeli premier to visit Russia, his spokesman Gad Ben Ari said Wednesday.

"I can confirm that the prime minister is considering a visit to Russia in the near future," he told AFP, after Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Boris Kolokov told Israeli journalists in Moscow Tuesday the visit would take place before the summer.

Political turmoil in Russia has led to fears in Israel that the flow of Jewish immigrants could be severely reduced if President Boris Yeltsin fails to win a vote of confidence in Sunday's referendum.

Nearly 17,000 of the 20,000 immigrants who arrived in Israel during the first quarter of 1993 were from former Soviet Union, which has provided the bulk of the nearly 500,000 Jews who have settled in the country since Mikhail Gorbachev opened the doors in late 1989.

Israeli officials hope to attract about 100,000 Jews to the country over each of the next five years, the vast majority from Russia.

The Jewish Agency, a semi-government body which oversees immigration, counts 1.7 million Jews in the former Soviet empire, 1.1 million of whom have started the lengthy procedures leading to emigration.

But Israel Radio's Moscow correspondent reported Wednesday that an estimated five million Jews live there. He quoted the demographic centre of the Russian parliament saying many were only now surfacing after 70 years in the communist closet.

Jews had been discovered in "secret cities" set up for scientific research that never appeared on any maps, the correspondent said.

Simcha Diniz, head of the agency, said Tuesday: "We have to get as many Jews as possible out of the states of the former USSR as quickly as we can and get them to Israel."

Mr. Diniz was reacting to comments by Viacheslav Kostikov, a senior Yeltsin aide who warned that if the president loses the referendum Jews could face sanctions and emigration could be slashed by what he termed the "Nazi" opposition.

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Concerts and Recitals
Theatre: The Royal Cultural Centre

Thursday, 22 April 1993 - 8:00 p.m.
A MUSICAL ENCOUNTER:
QANUN & PIANO
A unique musical event: Ganiat Abdul Muhi (qanun) and Hans Lerchbacher and Christian Senfert (piano) will show the correlation between the Qanun and the Piano. The program will include solo qanun and 4-hand piano pieces by Ravel, Poulenc and Satie.
Ticket Price: JD 5
In cooperation with Goethe Institute - Amman

Sunday, 25 April 1993 - 8:00 p.m.
VIOLIN & PIANO RECITAL
Seth Taylor (violin) and Monica Ripamonti (piano) will perform three violin sonatas by Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms. Their recital reinforces the application of Classical well-tempered tuning (A=432) and its implication on a better music appreciation.
Ticket Price: JD 5
In cooperation with Schiller Institute

Saturday, 24 April 1993 - 8:00 p.m.
CLARINET & PIANO RECITAL
A dynamic performance presented by Agnes Bastir (piano) and Ali Shawki (clarinet), two faculty members of the National Music Conservatory. The program will include pieces by Vivaldi, Mozart, Chopin and others.
Ticket Price: JD 5

Thursday, 29 April 1993 - 8:00 p.m.
PHILIPPE CARMENT TRIO
A Jazz recital by Philippe Carment (piano), Jean-Benoit Cuiot (drums) and Lionel Guillen (double bass).
Ticket Price: JD 5
In cooperation with the French Cultural Centre.

Attend all activities for JD 16
The National Music Conservatory, tel. 687620

MAP

الجمعية الأردنية للعلوم الطبية للفلسطينيين 1993

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بواسطة مركز شاريف الحسيني
شاركوا

في مسيرة الجمعية الأردنية للعلوم الطبية للفلسطينيين
يوم الجمعة 14 / 5 / 1993

في الساعة 8.30 صباحاً من مدرسة البكالوريا
في النازك - حارين
في تمام الساعة 11.00 صباحاً في مركز شاريف الحسيني
مكتب الجمعية 111-0

Israelis kill 2 and wound 56

(Continued from page 1)

19 homes with anti-tank rockets Tuesday and killed a Palestinian during a search operation.

Two more Palestinians were wounded at Shatti camp on the city's northern seashore. As violence erupted, Palestinian and Israeli human rights groups condemned the indefinite closure of the Gaza Strip, warning that the Gaza Strip faces a serious crisis, and urged foreign intervention.

"The economic and humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip is deteriorating fast and approaching crisis proportion," 20 organisations warned in a statement.

After 15 Israelis were killed in March, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin banned Palestinians from entering Israel from Gaza on March 29 and the West Bank two days later, throwing about 120,000 Arabs out of work.

Mr. Rabin said Wednesday that Israel would allow a total of 16,000-17,000 Palestinians to work in the country after an April 26 holiday, doubling the number who have been granted work permits this week.

But he warned the occupied territories would remain closed off for a long time. "The situation

will not return to what it was before," he said.

The groups held a press conference at the roadblock on the northern edge of Jerusalem and called for "the lifting of the military siege, (which) puts the provision of essential needs seriously at risk."

"The closure violates basic human rights such as the freedom of worship, the right to education, the right to medical care and severely restricts access to essential services."

The Palestinian Organisation for Human Rights criticised the "deafening silence" of foreign countries and urged signatories of the Geneva Convention and the United Nations to force Israel to obey international law.

The Gaza Centre for Rights charged Israel with resorting to "excessive collective punishment" against the Palestinians in the occupied territories at the same time as Gazans reel from "the cumulative impact of increasing killings and injuries, curfews, closed military zones, house demolitions, arrests, harassment and beatings."

The centre demanded "immediate international protection" for Palestinians.

Arabs to return to talks April 27

(Continued from page 1)

formed Mr. Christopher of their decision to attend the talks. The ninth round of a process which began 18 months ago but has made slow progress.

Diplomats expect that the United States and Israel will now hand over letters or issue statements summarising the promises and assurances made to the Palestinians.

Mr. Arafat said he expected the United States to make a statement immediately.

Asked what would happen to the December expellees, Mr. Arafat said: "I do not want to be premature. After this news conference here there will be a statement by the United States which includes answers to all these questions."

Mr. Arafat, who went to Damascus early Wednesday and flew to Cairo after the announcement, said later that the decision to resume the peace talks was a step toward peace and not surrender.

Hawatmeh critical of decision

(Continued from page 1)

Organisation (PLO) when the majority of members were absent," said Nayef Hawatmeh, leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP).

"That decision was immediately conveyed to the U.S. administration and the Egyptian government," he added.

"What happened afterwards was all window-dressing for the decision with most efforts (by the PLO leadership) concentrated on convincing members of the Palestinian delegation to participate in the coming round," he said.

Mr. Hawatmeh, whose group is the third largest inside the PLO umbrella and who has been critical of the conditions under which the Palestinians participated in the peace process, contended that the whole Palestinian people oppose resumption of the talks under the current circumstances. "We are demanding an end to Palestinian participation (in the talks) so that our national and the PLO's unity can be preserved and the Palestinians can have better terms for negotiations in accordance with U.N. resolutions," he said.

"The subject of Jerusalem should also be included on the agenda in the new conditions," Mr. Hawatmeh, who was speaking in an interview with the Jordan Times and its sister Arabic daily Al Rai upon arrival in Amman for a visit, quoted Dr. Haidar Abdul Shafi, head of the Palestinian negotiating team, as saying recently that the majority of the Palestinian people demanded withdrawal from the negotiations, if the deportations issue is not solved and conditions are improved for continued participation.

"The Arab position is an attempt to show our good intentions and to give peace a chance," Mr. Arafat told reporters.

"We will see if Israel remains committed to its promises... (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak) Rabin must understand that this is peace and not surrender," he said.

Mr. Arafat urged the United States not to be biased in Israel's favour.

The PLO chairman was scheduled to meet with President Hosni Mubarak later Wednesday. Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa, who was also in Amman Tuesday, accompanied Mr. Arafat to Damascus and then to Cairo.

At the press conference, Mr. Sharaa warned that Israel was placing obstacles in the path of the peace process.

Mr. Arafat pointed to hostilities in South Lebanon as such an obstruction.

Mr. Sharaa said the peace process is at "dangerous intersection."

"We Arab parties, who are keen about the peace process, are resuming the peace talks after we had called for its postponement," Mr. Sharaa said.

"We are confident that the co-sponsors, notably the United States, fully realise the deep concern sweeping the region. Therefore, this keenness has been expressed by giving a new opportunity which should be reciprocated in order that the peace talks would go in appropriate and positive atmosphere and in order that the peace process does not collapse completely," Mr. Sharaa said.

The delegation is "united and none of its members intends to withdraw," she told AFP.

Dr. Ashrawi was reacting to press comments in which Saeb Erekat, deputy leader of the team, was quoted as threatening to step down "if the PLO decides

Abdul Shafi 'surprised,' but will go

(Continued from page 1)

of allegiance or loyalty. We have been following orders for a long time and I would rather go and write my memoirs," Saeb Erekat told Reuters.

Dr. Erekat, a high-profile member of the delegation who enraged the Israelis at the opening of the peace talks in Madrid by wearing the Palestinian nationalist headscarf and pledging allegiance to then-outlawed PLO, said there were too many obstacles now to sanction another return to the table.

He said Washington, the main sponsor for the talks, had pledged that some of the Palestinian demands would be met — but after the Palestinians agree to attend negotiations.

"I've heard so many times in the past few days from the American once you agree there will be

Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi said the decision to return to the negotiating table was "very difficult but realistic" and it was adopted to maintain Arab solidarity.

Dr. Ashrawi said that the overnight talks in Amman between PLO leaders and the peace negotiators were "frank and responsible."

The delegation is "united and none of its members intends to withdraw," she told AFP.

Dr. Ashrawi was reacting to press comments in which Saeb Erekat, deputy leader of the team, was quoted as threatening to step down "if the PLO decides

steps taken... it seems to me they don't take into consideration the obstacles (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak) Rabin puts in our face," he said.

Dr. Erekat would not say what promises Washington had made. But he said a key issue was still the U.N. resolution calling for immediate return of the Palestinians expelled to South Lebanon in December, a move which halted the peace process.

"We have been saying... let Israel pledge not to resort to deportations (in the future) and this will give us an opening," Dr. Erekat, a university lecturer, said.

He and other negotiators say they have come under pressure from Palestinians in the occupied territories disillusioned that Israel has tightened its grip on the West Bank and Gaza despite over a year of peace talks.

S. Lebanon

(Continued from page 1)

smuggled out a pro-Israeli militiaman they seized in "security zone" the day before.

Another militiaman of the surrogate South Lebanon Army (SLA) escaped from his captors and returned to the SLA command headquarters in Marjayoun, provincial capital of the "security zone."

The separate announcements came as Israeli and SLA gunners were locked in intense artillery exchanges with guerrillas of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah throughout the central sector of the "security zone."

Security sources said the announcements ended a search mounted by the Israelis and the SLA for the two captives, who were taken prisoner by Hizbollah ambushers after a roadside bomb explosion Tuesday.

They said the search covered the areas neighbouring the blast scene near Jezzine, 75 kilometres southeast of Beirut.

Jezzine sits on the edge of a corridor leading to the 1,000-square-kilometre "security zone."

Security sources said Israeli and SLA gunners were pounding the villages of Lowerzein, Jarjou, Jbaa and Arabsalim with howitzers at a rate of seven rounds per minute.

The shelling killed two villagers, including a woman, and wounded four others, who were lying bleeding in Jbaa with rescuers unable to reach them because of the intensity of the bombardment, the sources said.

Gulf crisis cost Arabs \$676 billion

(Continued from page 1)

Fund officials said the figures collated from official and other sources had not been challenged by either government.

The report said that apart from the costs to Kuwait and Iraq resulting from war devastation, the Arab World as a whole also lost about \$91 billion from a sharp drop in economic growth.

After healthy GNP growth that averaged an annual seven per cent in the four years that preceded the crisis, Arab World GNP growth fell to 1.3 per cent in 1990 and showed a decline, or negative GNP growth, of seven per cent in 1991 when it stood at \$420 billion.

Figures for 1992 were not available yet but the AMF expected them to show good recovery.

The AMF put the value of higher government spending during the crisis, mainly on defence related costs, at \$56

billion. Loss of remittances by governments and individuals, mainly to poorer Arab states that depended on income from the Gulf, was put at another \$51 billion.

Net private transfer out of Arab oil producing states, mainly in the Gulf, reached \$37 billion in the two years of the crisis while transfers to the mainly labour-exporting Arab countries was \$14 billion.

The report said a large part of the \$23 billion deficit was accounted for by transfers by hundreds of thousands of expatriate Asian workers who returned home during the crisis.

It was not possible to put a value on the substantial environmental and other non-financial damage during the war.

The report was prepared with the help of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development and the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Jordan urges tough Bosnia action

(Continued from page 1)

influential powers had interests? Was that the standard? Let it be so. Nevertheless, the international community must ask: "Where are the human rights?" The image of hypocrisy had exceeded its politically accepted limit. He asked whether he would be exaggerating if he were to propose

that, in order to alleviate the ugliness of the picture and for the international community to be true to itself, that the World Conference on Human Rights, scheduled to be held in Vienna in June, be postponed and that discussion of human rights be suspended until the international community was able to preserve the human dignity of the Bosnian Muslim survivors.

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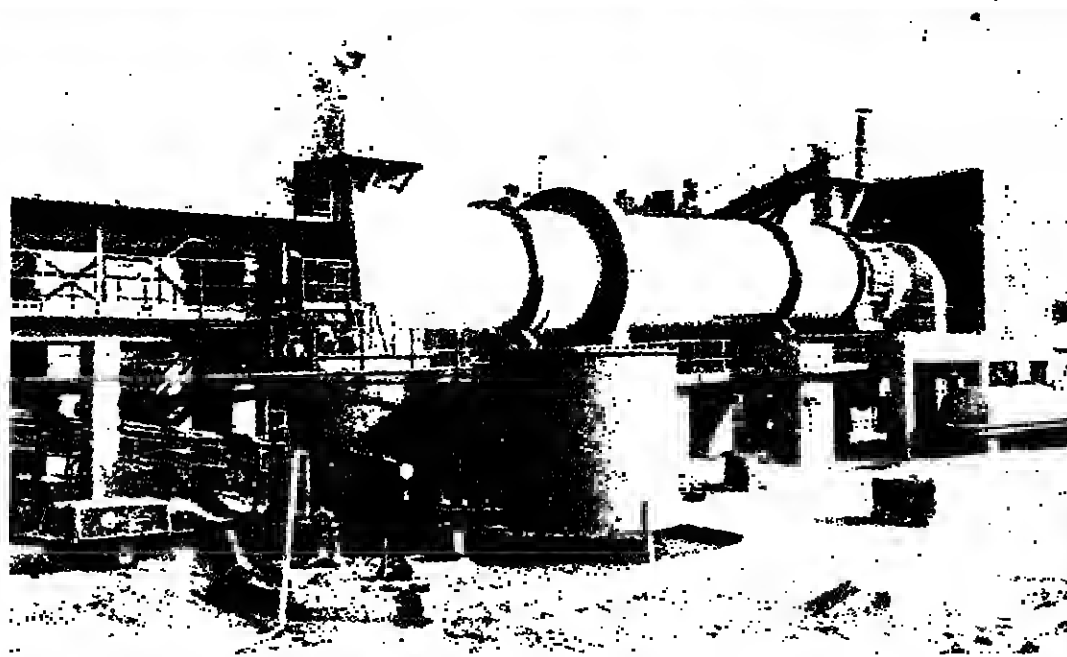
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ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 21/04/1993			
COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
JD	JD	JD	JD
ARAB BANK	159,590	135,000	137,790
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	89,171	4,920	5,040
BANK OF JORDAN	41,348	25,000	25,350
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	296	1,410	1,480
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	30,744	2,910	3,920
THE HOUSING BANK	1,142	3,600	3,820
JORDAN KUNAAT BANK	11,431	2,410	2,410
UNION BANK FOR SAVINGS & INVESTMENT	11,825	3,250	3,400
BUSINESS BANK	6,203	4,200	4,200
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	178,987	3,250	5,450
BEITY ELHALI SAVINGS INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	68,154	1,700	1,700
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	6,203	4,200	4,200
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	14,956	1,480	1,550
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	10,275	1,200	1,200
AMMAN SEAD INSURANCE	185,281	1,140	1,190
JORDAN PRIME INSURANCE	20,784	2,970	2,980
ARAB LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	165	3,300	3,300
JORDAN GULF INSURANCE	582	2,850	2,910
ARAB UNION INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE	132,389	2,190	2,190
AL-WIL AL-JAWALI INSURANCE	1,854	5,850	6,140
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	2,789	1,400	1,400
JORDAN HOTEL & TOURISM	6,418	5,650	5,750
UNION DISTRICT ELECTRICITY	517	0,500	0,470
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	26,382	4,130	4,130
JORDAN TOURISM & SPA COMPLEX	68,617	1,770	1,770
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	125,119	0,620	0,700
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	6,700	1,080	1,110
JORDAN GULF REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	4,674	1,350	1,350
PETRA ENTERPRISES & EQUIPMENT LEASING	6,361	1,390	1,390
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTRE	4,240	1,200	1,200
INVESTMENT EQUIP. REPAIRING & MAINTENANCE	12,000	6,520	6,500
JORDAN PRESS & PUBLISHING JAO-DETOUR	25,040	2,220	2,300
ORIENTED MIDDLE EAST & CONSUMER HOTELS	49,244	2,000	2,000
THE JORDAN COAST FACTORIES	683	4,500	4,550
JORDAN PROSPERITY MINES	25,302	10,500	10,500
AL-WIL AL-JAWALI MINES	369,252	6,400	6,350
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	141,498	7,050	7,140
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	219,915	2,500	2,450
JORDAN DAILY	12,770	1,200	1,200
JORDAN PAPER INDUSTRIES	2,160	4,500	4,380
JORDAN PAPER & CARBON FACTORIES	2,015	3,100	3,100
THE PUBLIC HOUSING	49,019	21,000	21,000
ARAB CEMENT INDUSTRIES	19,421	1,220	1,250
SPINNING & WEAVING	5,710	0,710	0,710
ARAB CEMENT INDUSTRIES	521,009	14,550	15,000
DAR AL DANA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	9,637	3,410	3,270
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	11,300	11,300	11,300
ARAB ALUMINIUM INDUSTRIES	18,010	0,900	0,890
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	107,413	2,040	2,140
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	1,338	0,500	0,510
JORDAN MEDICAL CORPORATION	79,901	5,990	6,010
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRIES	79,901	5,990	6,010
NATIONAL INDUSTRIES	200,913	4,300	4,350
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	6,012	4,450	4,450
JORDAN RECONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES	24,374	4,000	4,010
ALADIS INDUSTRIES	5,418	1,290	1,280
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & WAREHOUSE	1,042,354	10,500	10,500
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	6,012	4,450	4,450
ARAB CEMENT INDUSTRIES	45,402	4,180	4,200
ARAB CEMENT CO. FOR AGRI. & FOOD PROD.	55,911	1,980	1,980
UNION ALUMINIUM INDUSTRIES	201,873	5,130	5,100
GRAND TOTAL	5,221,694		
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET	15,3750		
TRADING VOLUME IN THE PARALLEL MARKET	1,20		



A furnace used to dry phosphate at Wadi Al Abiad mine



Phosphate export facility at Aqaba

Jordan Phosphate Mines Co. complains of excess labour, pressure to hire more staff

JPMC net profit drops sharply

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Net profit plunged 50 per cent at Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) due, mainly, to lower sale prices and higher administrative and general expenses which caused the worst financial results in many years.

JPMC's 39th annual report showed that the 1992 net profit was JD 16.1 million, down from JD 33.1 million posted in 1991. Net profit was JD 4.4 million in 1990, JD 107.2 million in 1989

and JD 22.4 million in 1988. According to the report made available to the Jordan Times Wednesday, net sales stood at JD 206.1 million at the end of 1992 compared to JD 218.6 at the end of 1991. Of the 1992 net sales, JD 120.1 million were earned by the phosphate unit.

The JD 12.5 million decline in sales was a result of lower prices of phosphates due to reduced European demand and higher competition for Asian markets, especially India. In terms of tonnage, JPMC sold 4,264 tonnes in 1992 compared to 4,245 tonnes in 1991.

The record low fertilizer price brought JPMC's fertilizer unit to a total loss as costs amounted to JD 87.3 million, JD 1.3 million above the JD 86.0 million earned by the unit.

The report blamed Russia and the United States for flooding international markets with low-priced fertilizers and, as a result, causing world prices to plunge to unprecedented levels.

Current indications show that the situation regarding phosphate and fertilizer markets and prices will continue for some time," the report said.

Another key factor which JPMC cited as a hindrance to its efforts to boost profit was over-staffing and pressure to hire over and above its actual needs.

"With full consideration to the unemployment problem in the Kingdom, the JPMC cannot hire any more persons in field of specialisation it does not require because that would only increase costs at a time when the company

should endeavour to cut spending by all means," the report said. It added: "The company hopes that everybody would understand its position and cooperate with its national role."

JPMC had a total workforce of 5,564 at the end of last year, up from 5,216 at the end of 1991 and 5,135 at the end of 1990.

Salaries and other benefits cost JPMC JD 31.0 million in 1992 while in 1991 such costs amounted to only JD 27.4 million.

Despite the reduced profit, JPMC will distribute JD 5.1 million in dividends or, 15 per cent of the JD 1 par value share, as it had JD 3.8 million in retained earnings carried forward from 1991 in addition to the JD 16.1 million the company earned last year.

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Ukraine seeks investment to boost fuel production

KIEV (R) — Ukraine may have major offshore deposits of oil and gas in the Black Sea but large investments would be needed to develop them and help free the country from dependence on Russian fuel supplies, industry experts say.

At a recent meeting of the State Energy Board, Geology Minister Mykola Havrilenko said Ukraine hoped to increase oil production to seven million tonnes a year (140,000 barrels per day (b/d)) and gas output to 40 billion cubic metres by 2000.

Oil output was 3.8 million tonnes (76,000 b/d) in 1992, down from 13 million (260,000 b/d) in the 1970s. Gas output has fallen to 20 billion cubic metres from 60 billion 10 years ago.

Government officials said Ukraine had reserves "ready for exploitation" of 238 million tonnes (1.8 billion barrels) of oil and 1.1 billion cubic metres of gas. But total reserves were probably much bigger than that, they added.

But they said significant investment was needed to develop the deposits on the Black Sea shelf.

"If the government does not help us, oil and gas production will fall further this year," said Boris Zaritsky, head of the Ukrneft state oil company.

Yuri Yoffe, deputy prime minister responsible for energy problems, told the meeting the Ukrainian government was prepared to help. But he added:

"The fall in gas and oil supply in Ukraine is a crime. Of course we will help you. But first of all you must work harder."

The meeting was called to discuss how to boost Ukrainian oil and gas output.

"The issue of oil and gas is a life or death problem for Ukraine," Mr. Yoffe said.

Ukraine needs more than 40 million tonnes of oil (800,000 b/d) and more than 100 billion cubic metres of gas a year, but Russia has so far promised to supply only 20 million tonnes (400,000 b/d) of oil and the two countries are arguing about the price of gas deliveries.

Ukraine is also looking for alternative energy sources. It already has agreements with Turkmenistan and Iran.

A Ukrainian delegation headed by Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma is currently in the Gulf region seeking new supplies.

But one industry official said the country might have its own deposits of billions of tonnes of oil. "Our specialists say there are between one and three billion tonnes of oil and perhaps more, but we are waiting for final results from a government commission," Evgeny Maximov, head of the Black Sea oil and gas company, said.

Western experts said Black Sea reserves were largely unexplored, but they doubted if deposits could be counted in billions of tonnes. Billions of barrels were more likely.

UAP reports 71% profit plunge

PARIS (AFP) — UAP, the biggest French government-owned insurance group, said Tuesday that its group-share consolidated net profit plunged by 71 per cent last year, to 1.08 billion francs (\$201 million) against 3.7 billion francs in 1991. Gross operating income has up 22.2 per cent in 1991, to 189.8 billion francs. Premium income from the group's insurance business hit 125.9 billion francs, up 19.6 per cent from the previous year.

UAP explained that the latter increase has due primarily to the 1992 full integration of British company Sun Life. On an unchanged consolidation basis, premium income would have risen by only 5.1 per cent. The announcement also said that the sharp drop in net profit is explained particularly by the decline of 1.5 billion francs in the contribution made by the banking sector, pointing to the effect of the French property market crisis on Banque Worms, a 100 per cent-owned UAP subsidiary.

It noted that the results of Victoire insurance, in which UAP has a 34 per cent stake, had been affected unfavourably by the losses of its Danish subsidiary Balthica. Altogether, the collapse of the insurance business in Scandinavian countries depressed the UAP consolidated result by 670 million francs.

Unrealized capital gains, before taxes, amounted to 43.7 billion francs at the end of 1992, off 2.5 per cent from a year earlier.

Kuwait boosts banks with bad-debt bond rate hike

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait's central bank has given a \$165 million boost to enfeebled commercial banks by raising the yield on the government bonds that form about half of their assets, commercial bank sources said Tuesday.

The sources said the bank had retroactively raised to six per cent from five per cent the calendar 1992 interest rate on the bonds, which were issued last year as part of an attempt to solve the emirate's thorny \$20 billion bad debt problem.

The move, carried out in March 1993, injects over \$50 million (165 million) into the banks' 1992 sheets, the sources said. Five of the emirate's six commercial banks are due to report 1992 results in the coming weeks.

"Without this move some of the banks would have reported losses or a neutral position for 1992," a source said. "This is not only good news for the banks, for some of them it's also their saviour."

The central bank declined immediate comment.

The bad debts stem largely from the 1982 crash of a now defunct informal bourse, Souq Al Manakh, created by Kuwaitis who borrowed from banks to speculate on new Gulf investment opportunities.

The collapse of a classic speculative bubble built on post-dated cheques badly affected the commercial banks and handicapped what was one of the Gulf's most dynamic economies.

The trail of tangled debt remains unpaid to this day.

In the first stage of a solution to the problem, the government last year swapped the banks' portfolios of bad loans for secure but low-yielding government bonds which mature in 10 or 20 years with maximum value of 5.6 million dinars (\$18.5 billion).

Even at six per cent the yield remains well below the eight to nine per cent commercial cost of funds, presenting the banks with the continued prospect of minimal profitability and stagnant earnings until bad debt solution is found.

Repayment of the debts would allow the government to redeem the bonds, freeing up commercial bank assets which the banks can place at more advantageous rates.

The central bank's move raises to about 300 million dinars (\$900 million) the cost of interest on the bonds for calendar 1992. The rate for 1993 has not yet been set, the sources said.

The commercial banks who had held most dubious loans, and hence government bonds, benefit most from the bond rate rise.

Bond to asset ratio is 76 per cent at Al Ahli Bank, which holds 1.1 billion dinars (\$3.6 billion) of bonds.

The rate is 66 per cent at Commercial Bank, 51 per cent at Gulf Bank, 58 per cent at Burgan Bank and 62 per cent at Bank of Kuwait and the Middle East.

Five of the commercial banks recorded heavy losses for the 1990 and 1991 reporting period. The two years were combined because of disruption caused by the seven-month Iraqi invasion.

The sixth, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), the oldest and largest of the banks, had 1992 net profit of 42.5 million dinars (\$140 million), a resilient two per cent rise from combined profit of 41.6 million dinars (\$137 million) in 1990 and 1991.

NBK largely avoided involvement in Souq Al Manakh.

The Kuwaiti government Tuesday criticised new proposals aimed at ending the \$20 billion bad debt problem that has enfeebled the banking system since 1982.

Finance Minister Nayef Abdullah Al Rodhan said in a statement some of the preliminary proposals drafted by parliament's finance and economic committee and debated by the assembly Tuesday were impractical and could result in unfairness.

Sheikh Rodhan said the measures wrongly downgraded the role of the central bank and commercial banks in setting repayment terms. He added that easier terms offered to so-called "small" debtors would cost the state 366 million dinars (\$1.2 billion) in debt that ought to be repaid.

The assembly is to continue debating the measures Saturday. A committee spokesman told the assembly the measures had been drafted for discussion only and were not final.

Parliamentarians told the assembly in a heated debate they wanted the committee to propose softer terms for debtors financially damaged by Iraq's seven-month occupation.

Sheikh Rodhan's statement, issued to reporters attending the debate, said the committee was mistaken in setting different repayment terms for small and large debtors.

"One of the objectives that the committee failed to realise is that the solution should ensure relative justice as much as possible," Sheikh Rodhan's statement said.

"The second objective that they failed to realise is that the treatment should be realistic and practical," it added.

The committee's plan advocates tougher terms for big borrowers who individually owe more than 500,000 dinars (\$1.65 million) and a partial debt write-off for small borrowers owing less.

The plan requires big borrowers state their financial positions to a technical committee of accountants, economists, central bankers and a judge that would set repayment terms.

Sheikh Rodhan said the technical committee had insufficient commercial bank and central bank representation and its guidelines for setting repayment terms were unclear.

Rumours of progress in efforts to solve the issue sent shares of the seven commercial banks sharply higher in recent days.

The central bank said earlier in a memorandum to the committee that some of the proposals were "contradictory and ambiguous" and ran the risk of unfairness.

The committee recommends big borrowers, believed to include some of the emirate's wealthiest businessmen, repay all they owe over 10 or 20 years, although it raises the possibility of concessions on future interest payment requirements.

Small borrowers would be required to pay between 25 and 35 per cent of their debt over a maximum of two years.

Concern over the 11-year-old issue has helped keep the economy stagnant despite a post-Gulf war revival in oil revenues and big spending on the repair of oilfields torched by Iraq.

In a first phase of the debt solution, the government last year bought \$20 billion of the banks' portfolios of bad loans in return for rock-solid but low-yielding 20-year treasury bonds.

Kenya devalues shilling, takes action against shaky banks

NAIROBI (R) — Kenya, suffering a major shortage of foreign currency, devalued the shilling Tuesday and took action to deal with mismanagement and corruption in a beleaguered financial sector.

Bankers and economic analysts welcomed a 23.47 per cent cut in the official rate of exchange against the U.S. dollar and central bank takeover of a number of lending institutions, but doubted they represented a major shift of government policy.

Most analysts said the government had been forced to take action to try and contain a looming economic crisis, spurred by huge unpaid loans to so-called "political banks," high interest rates and a shortage of hard currency.

"These measures may well have been taken for all the wrong reasons. Nevertheless they are to be welcomed if they lead to more of the same," said one World Bank official.

In March, the government, angered by an International Monetary Fund (IMF) refusal to recommend a resumption of critical balance of payments support of some \$40 million a month, abruptly reversed economic liberalisation policies.

Foreign currency controls were reimposed in the key agriculture and tourism industries and President Daniel Arap Moi accused the IMF of trying to impose "dictatorial and suicidal policies" on the East African country.

Bankers said Mr. Moi and his closest supporters had expected an effective flotation of the currency on Feb. 19, which saw its value halved in barely five weeks, and the creation of an inter-bank market to be sufficient to win back IMF approval.

But an IMF fact-finding mission expressed concern over a surge in money supply last year of some 35 per cent and urged high interest rates to mop up excessive liquidity fuelling inflation of near 40 per cent.

Western governments also pushed for action on so-called "political banks," from which senior figures of the ruling elite are suspected to have taken huge unsecured loans to finance reelection in historic multi-party polls last December.

Bankers say pressure mounted after banks, facing crippling interest payments on high outstanding loans, were unable to turn to a central bank with near-empty coffers for "back door" help.

On Monday, Finance Minister Musalia Mudavadi said the government had embarked on a "major effort" to restructure and consolidate the banking industry.

After taking over control of trade bank — whose top directors fled the country last week — Mr. Mudavadi said the government was setting up a deposit protection fund and taking control of at least nine other shaky finance houses.

On Tuesday, private banks quoted between 72 and 75 Kenyan shillings for the dollar.

"It may be by default but the government seems to be going the way the IMF wanted. If they are clever they will present it that way, and a return of at least some quick-disbursal aid may not be that far away," said another commercial banker.

IBM reports \$285m loss for first quarter

NEW YORK (R) — Struggling computer giant International Business Machines (IBM) Corp Tuesday reported a \$285 million loss for the first quarter, blaming a double-digit decline in mainframe computer sales for much of its problems.

But industry analysts said the results were in line with expectations and that the benefits of IBM's recent restructuring efforts were already becoming evident.

The deficit was in marked contrast to IBM's profit of \$2.54 billion in the year-ago period when it benefitted from a \$1.9 billion one-time gain from an accounting change.

Revenues in the latest period slipped to \$13.1 billion, off seven per cent from \$14 billion in the 1992 quarter.

IBM's new chairman Louis Gerstner, installed last month as the first outside chief of the world's largest computer maker after it posted record losses last year, saw a mixed outlook for the company he was hired to turn around.

"These results reflect weak demand and continued competitive pressures in many of our hardware product lines, particularly mainframe computers and large disk drives," Mr. Gerstner said.

But he added that demand for the company's personal computers, workstations, and service businesses remained strong.

In a conference call with industry analysts to discuss the results, other IBM officials said a big drop in sales of the company's mainframe computers well into the "double digits," accounted for the lion's share of the loss.

The mainframes, which have IBM's most profitable line of computers, traditionally account for more than 60 per cent of the company's earnings.

Analysts said mainframe sales may have tumbled as much as 30 per cent to 50 per cent during the quarter, versus the year-ago period.

While mainframe sales fell significantly, IBM said it "took aggressive actions" to bolster competitiveness. The company unveiled 18 mainframe models and announced plans to introduce microprocessor-based systems later this year.

Analysts said that IBM's recent restructuring is finally starting to show some benefits.

During the conference call with analysts, however, IBM officials were cautious and offered no glimpse of when a recovery in earnings may occur, analysts said.

They said IBM director of investor relations Jim Clippard hinted IBM could slash even more jobs during the second or third quarter. IBM has said it will cut more than 25,000 jobs.

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EXPO '93

Yeltsin aides upbeat as 1st few votes are cast in referendum

MOSCOW (R) — Boris Yeltsin's top lieutenants declared victory was within the president's grasp Wednesday as handful of voters in distant corners of Russia began casting their votes in a referendum on power.

ITAR-TASS News Agency said sailors and fishermen — due to put to sea — in the Arctic Kola peninsula had become the first voters to cast their ballots in a poll that could help determine Mr. Yeltsin's political future and Russia's.

With four days remaining until the rest of the country's 107 million voters have their say, top Yeltsin aides struck a consistently optimistic note.

"I think the president will win and the power crisis will end with early parliamentary elections, in which I think the president's candidates have serious chances," said Yegor Gaidar, former acting premier and now an economic adviser to Mr. Yeltsin.

But, in an interview with Kommolskaya Pravda newspaper, he added metaphorically that reformers could be up against the firing squad if Sunday's referendum goes against Mr. Yeltsin.

Supporters of the reformist president are portraying the vote as a do-or-die struggle for the

future of Russia in an attempt to shake the electorate out of its profound apathy and disenchantment with politics.

Voters will be asked whether they support Mr. Yeltsin, whether they back his arduous path of free-market reform, and whether they want early presidential and parliamentary elections.

The battle is made more complex by rival interpretations of the voting system.

The Congress of People's Deputies, Russia's top parliamentary body, set rules last month requiring Mr. Yeltsin to win support from 50 per cent of all eligible voters to claim victory in the vote of confidence.

The president's camp says Mr. Yeltsin needs only half of actual votes cast on the day — a much easier target — to claim a firm mandate from the people.

At stake is the future course of economic reforms, which have transformed the old Communist system in the past 16 months but taken a heavy toll. Inflation hit 2,600 per cent last year, output fell by a fifth and a third of the population lives below the official poverty line.

Two more close Yeltsin aides

said in interviews they expected the president to win the ballot — on his terms — and press on with political reform to break Russia's constitutional deadlock.

Legal adviser and Deputy Premier Sergei Shakhrai told Moskovsky Komsomolets newspaper the Kremlin leader would use a "yes" vote to press ahead with a new constitution and fresh parliamentary elections.

First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Shumeiko was quoted by ITAR-TASS as telling Russian journalists Mr. Yeltsin would win at least half of all votes cast. He would leave the economic programme basically intact.

"The government's programme of economic moves has been confirmed and we shall work on its implementation," he said.

The power struggle, which has significantly weakened Mr. Yeltsin's grip on power, has its roots in a Soviet-era constitution which fails clearly to separate the branches of state authority and threatens to make the country ungovernable.

A battle between the president and Congress climaxed last month when conservative deputies failed narrowly in a bid to impeach Mr. Yeltsin.

In comments published Tues-

day, Vice-president Alexander Rutskoi said he would stand for Russian president if Mr. Yeltsin was forced to resign after the referendum.

Meanwhile Russia's constitutional court, considering a challenge to the rules for Sunday's referendum, has decided in favour of President Yeltsin on the main questions, a court source said Wednesday.

The court would announce that the president needed only a majority of the turnout to win a vote of confidence, rather than a majority of the entire electorate as stipulated by the Congress, the source said.

The turnout would have to be at least 50 per cent. The judges decided that the same standard would apply for the second of the four questions on the ballot paper, on whether voters approved of the president's reform policies, the source said.

For the third and fourth questions, on calling early elections for the president and the deputies, the court sided with Congress.

It endorsed the legislature's decision that these questions needed the support of 50 per cent of the electorate to pass.

Explosives hinder search for Texas cult bodies

Waco, Texas (R) — Investigators were expected Wednesday to retrieve charred bodies from the rubble of the Waco cult compound, where a fireball ended a 51-day siege and sparked a political controversy.

U.S. President Bill Clinton Tuesday ordered an inquiry into Monday's disastrous FBI attempt to end the stand-off with Branch Davidian sect leader David Koresh and his followers.

But the Democratic president, whose first 100 days in office have been marked by several political missteps and fumbles, deflected mounting accusations of federal bungling.

Eighty-six people, including 17 children and Mr. Koresh, died in an apparent mass suicide after a fire ripped through the camp.

Two of the nine survivors have denied there was a suicide pact and blamed the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Derek Lovelock, who along with fellow Briton Renos Avramis is in custody in Waco, told British Broadcasting Corporation Radio the fire was caused when federal authorities raided the compound, causing kerosene lamps to be knocked over.

"They charged the building with tanks and squashed the building, smashed it to pieces," he said. "We had kerosene lamps in there because they had cut the electricity off."

Mr. Avramis made similar accusations Tuesday and Mr. Koresh's attorney said "this wasn't a planned suicide."

But Mr. Clinton, denying he was trying to avoid blame, said Mr. Koresh must bear ultimate responsibility. He also rejected suggestions Attorney General Janet Reno, in charge of the operation, should resign.

"I was frankly surprised... that anyone could suggest that the attorney general resign because some religious fanatics murdered themselves," the president said.

In Waco, investigators were expected to recover bodies Wednesday. Only three explosives experts have entered the wrecked site because the area is still volatile with explosives and ammunition igniting from the heat, a state official said.

"They say that there are bodies of course all over the crime scene," said Mike Cox, a Department of Public Safety spokesman. "All of the bodies that they had been able to see are charred."

One body on the edge of the site was taken to the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office in Fort Worth which will do the autopsies on all the remains.

The FBI said identification of the bodies will primarily have to depend on dental records.

The other bodies cannot be retrieved until the area is deemed safe from explosions," Mr. Cox said.

Digging out evidence and remains will be a lengthy task because of the amount of rubble. He said the crime scene was the largest he had faced since its inception in 1935.

Search and arrest warrants of the original Feb. 28 raid on the cult compound, unsealed Tuesday, stated Mr. Koresh and his followers had spent nearly \$200,000 on weapons and ammunition between October 1991 and February 1993.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Ukraine must be non-nuclear — Kravchuk

KIEV (R) — President Leonid Kravchuk told a fractious parliament as it geared up to debate the delayed ratification of a major arms accord that Ukraine had to become a non-nuclear state. Deputies leaving the closed session said Mr. Kravchuk told the chamber that Ukraine, the only signatory to the START-I treaty still to ratify the pact, had neither the technical means nor the moral right to keep its former Soviet weaponry. But, speaking in a noisy debate on Ukraine's military doctrine, he said Kiev had the right to expect far greater compensation to cover the costs of disarmament.

Millionaire, councilman win in L.A.

LOS ANGELES (R) — After a campaign overshadowed by the Rodney King civil rights trial, a millionaire banker and a Chinese-American politician declared victory in the mayoral primary Tuesday night and said they were ready for a June runoff. Richard Riordan, a conservative Republican businessman, won nearly 34 per cent of the vote while Michael Woo, a liberal Democratic city councilman, received 24 per cent, with more than half of the ballots counted. The two men will go head to head June 8 in a final vote to decide who will succeed Tom Bradley, retiring after serving as Los Angeles mayor for 20 years. The next highest vote-getter was city councilman Joel Wachs with 11 per cent, but only the two top candidates qualify for the runoff. Mr. Riordan has campaigned heavily on a law-and-order platform. Mr. Woo has concentrated on the theme of racial harmony.

U.S., Germany plan swap of soldiers

BRUSSELS (AP) — As part of NATO's post-cold war strategy, the United States is swapping thousands of soldiers with Germany in an unprecedented move that would put GIS under German command in wartime. The U.S. and German armies will exchange divisions of 16,000 to 20,000 troops at a ceremony Thursday in Germany, creating two multinational corps to defend Europe. It will be a departure from Washington's traditional insistence on commanding its own troops. "The United States has not in the past designated any of its forces for operations directly under the command of others," said U.S. General John Galvin, former chief of European forces for the 16-nation North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

Akihito to visit Okinawa Friday

TOKYO (AP) — Since assuming the throne four years ago, Emperor Akihito has criss-crossed Asia trying to lay to rest the lingering ghosts of Japan's wartime past. On Friday, Emperor Akihito turns his attention homeward to Okinawa, where some of World War II's most ferocious land battles were waged. Emperor Akihito will be the first Japanese monarch to set foot upon Okinawan soil, and his first stop will be at a graveyard for nearly 200,000 people who died in the name of his father, the late Emperor Hirohito. "I lost my husband and my brother in the war," said Yuriko Minei, who is to lead Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko through a smaller memorial to 167 women and girls of the "Star Lily Brigade" who died in the war or committed suicide to avoid being captured by Americans.

Tokyo's capital status is at stake

TOKYO (APF) — The creation of a new Japanese political and administrative capital to replace Tokyo was unthinkable only a few years ago, but the idea is moving closer to reality as the 21st century approaches. Earthquakes and overpopulation in Tokyo, have put the idea of establishing a new capital city at the forefront of political debate. A special government panel which includes 14 MPs met for the first time Tuesday under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa to consider moving the Diet, or parliament, and other government bodies out of Tokyo. The transfer was given the go-ahead last December by parliament after more than 30 years of study to seek ways of reducing the burden of overpopulation on Tokyo, an urban sprawl of some 30 million inhabitants.

Plot against Shevardnadze denied

MOSCOW (R) — Georgia's defence minister Wednesday denied newspaper reports that he was plotting a coup against the country's leader Eduard Shevardnadze, the Russian News Agency Interfax said. "This disinformation is the result of intrigues by Georgia's enemies," Tengiz Kitovani said. "Today, when we are strengthening the Georgian army, some people are striving to stop this process, to sow discord in Georgia." The Russian newspaper Izvestia Tuesday quoted sources close to Georgian intelligence as saying Mr. Kitovani held a secret meeting with local officials in rebel western Georgia with a view to ousting Mr. Shevardnadze.

N. Korea 'interested' in talks with U.S.

TOKYO (R) — North Korea, facing possible U.N. sanctions for denying access to suspected nuclear weapons sites, said Wednesday it was interested in holding talks with the United States. Citing foreign news reports that the U.S. State Department had expressed willingness to have high-level talks with North Korea, the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) monitored in Tokyo quoted a Foreign Ministry spokesman as saying: "If this is true, we show interest in this. If DPRK (North Korea)-U.S. talks are realised, matters of mutual concern including the nuclear problem will be discussed there." North Korea announced on March 12 it would withdraw from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty rather than allow inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of two suspected nuclear weapons sites. The IAEA this month referred the matter to the United Nations Security Council, which could decide to impose sanctions.

Patten, China in conciliatory mood

HONG KONG (R) — Governor Chris Patten and his old Chinese adversary Lu Ping, at odds for months over Mr. Patten's plans for Hong Kong's future, both sent conciliatory signals on the eve of talks to try to settle the dispute.

Mr. Patten made an appeal Wednesday to the United States not to drag the row into the issue of trade privileges for China, while Mr. Lu, the director of China's Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office, promised Beijing would not undermine the colonial government before Peking regains Hong Kong in 1997.

Analysts still expect tough negotiations but their remarks contrasted with recent test exchanges which had threatened to sour the talks even before they began in Peking Thursday.

Mr. Patten, who is due to meet U.S. President Bill Clinton next month, told the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong that cancelling China's most favoured nation (MFN) trade status would halve the colony's economic growth and cost 70,000 jobs.

Congressional critics of China are seeking to attack human rights and arms proliferation conditions to China's MFN status and analysts say Peking's furious attacks on Mr. Patten's reform proposals could give them a convenient weapon.

Ceasefire holds in Nagorno-Karabakh

BAKU, Azerbaijan (Agencies) — A two-day ceasefire has gone into effect in Nagorno-Karabakh to allow international observers to visit the disputed region, Azerbaijani officials said Tuesday.

The ceasefire took effect at midnight local time (0400 GMT) Monday, with a possible extension if the team is still in the region, said Roshan Jemshid, a spokesman for Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry.

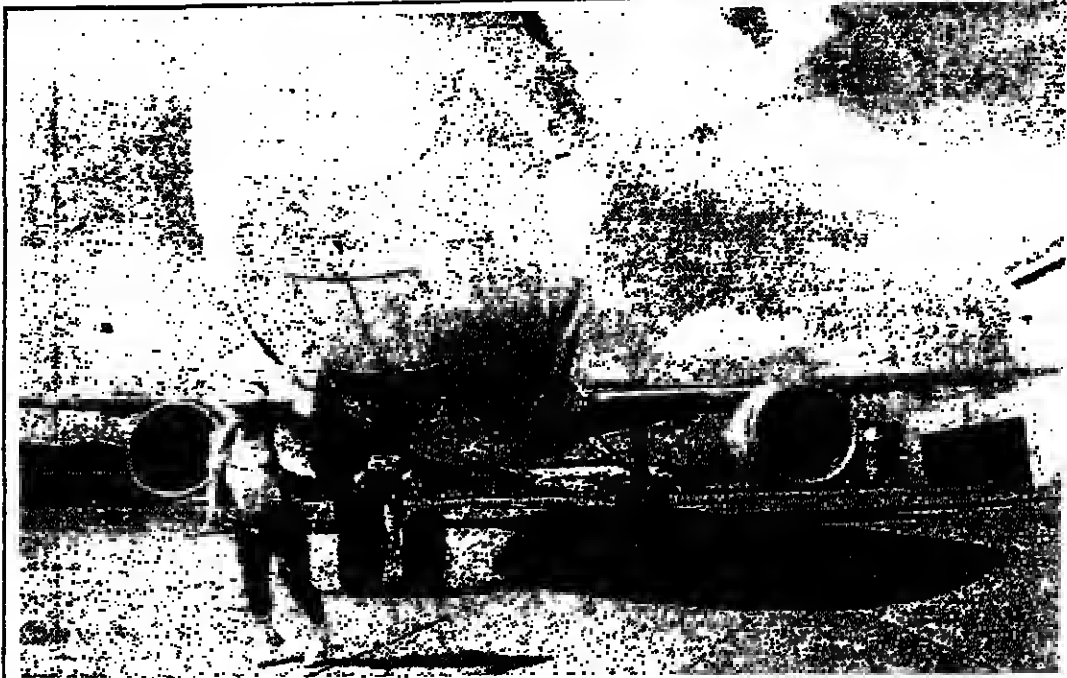
There was no immediate confirmation of the ceasefire agreement from Armenian officials. Serj Sarkisian, the commander of Nagorno-Karabakh's self-defence forces, said a formal ceasefire agreement had not been reached. He said, however, that he had ordered his troops not to fire back at Azerbaijani soldiers.

The team of military and diplomatic officials from the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe is looking at the communications, transport and food situations in preparation for deployment of a monitoring mission of 600 CSCE staff members. The team arrived Tuesday morning in Agdam in Azerbaijan on the border of Nagorno-Karabakh, said Eldar Hajiyev, head of Baku's helicopter airport.

No new fighting was reported in Nagorno-Karabakh, which has been blanketed Tuesday by heavy fog that would normally restrict battles anyway.

A railway bridge on Georgian territory near the Armenian border was blown up Tuesday, severing Armenia's only rail link to the outside.

No injuries were reported in the blast near the Georgian station in Sadakblo, the ITAR-TASS and Iprinda News Agencies said. The bridge was expected to be repaired by Wednesday, said Iprinda, a Georgian



WORLD'S STRONGEST MAN: Australia's David Huxley, the world's strongest man, pulls a Qantas Boeing 767-300 ER weighing 105 tonnes 25 metres across the tarmac at Sydney Airport on April 21. Huxley, who weighs 125 kilograms, hopes to break his next world record by towing a 480-tonne ferry across Sydney Harbour on May 22 (AFP photo)

Rome defence minister under probe

ROME (Agencies) — Anti-mafia prosecutors have put Italian Defence Minister Salvo Ando under investigation for alleged violations of electoral laws, the Italian News Agency (ANSA) said Wednesday.

"I am indignant, but calm," he was quoted as saying by another Italian News Agency (AGI).

Mr. Ando was reacting to a report from his home town Catania in eastern Sicily that the local anti-mafia prosecutor's office was asking parliament to lift his immunity from prosecution.

Mr. Ando, a Socialist, himself disclosed earlier this month that a mafia turncoat mentioned his name to police and was trying to implicate him.

The minister has since said the mafia was out to punish him for having sent the army to Sicily after two mafia-busting judges were blown up last year.

ANSA said earlier that police had arrested a close aide of former Justice Minister Claudio Martelli in connection with Italy's huge corruption probe.

Almost 1,400 people have been

arrested nationwide in the past 14 months in an investigation that has rocked the Italian establishment.

Sergio Restelli, Mr. Martelli's personal secretary, was detained in Rome over allegations of graft and breaking the law on financing of political parties.

The arrest was ordered by Milan magistrates leading the year-long "mani pulite" (clean hands) probe which centres on allegations that politicians routinely took bribes from businessmen in return for the award of public works contracts.

Mr. Martelli resigned from the government last February over an investigation into a slush fund alleged to have been operated by the Socialist Party.

Meanwhile, an Italian Senate committee could rule as early as Thursday on lifting former Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti's parliamentary immunity. Its president said Wednesday.

Mr. Andreotti, 74, seven times prime minister and once a pillar of Italian politics, has been charged with complicity with the

Sicilian mafia.

Mr. Andreotti, a senator for life, has vehemently denied the charges.

Giovanni Pellegrino, president of the Senate committee examining Mr. Andreotti's immunity, said the committee could rule by Thursday or by next Tuesday at the latest on lifting Mr. Andreotti's parliamentary immunity.

If lifted, Mr. Andreotti could face a trial on the charges.

Turncoats of the crime syndicate have said that Mr. Andreotti met several times with Cosa Nostra leaders. The most flagrant charge includes a meeting in Palermo in 1986 with "boss of bosses" Totò Riina who kissed Mr. Andreotti, according to statements made by ex-mafia member Baldassare di Maggio.

Other charges include photos showing Mr. Andreotti sitting next to parents of a suspected mafia member. "I found myself next to a humble family from Sicily, with whom I exchanged some words and whom I have never seen again," Mr. Andreotti said in his defence.

Police arrest 5 whites in Hani killing

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Police arrested five whites in a pre-dawn swoop Wednesday in connection with the assassination of black leader Chris Hani, whose murder sparked a wave of unrest and protest throughout South Africa.

The African National Congress (ANC), which announced it was delaying the start of a nationwide civil disobedience campaign, said it had been told by police of the identities of those arrested but refused to name them.

"Our preliminary reports indicate that there are prominent local figures in the Conservative Party among them," African National Congress spokesman Niehaus told Reuters.

"The arrests prove what we have been saying about a wide net of people being involved in Chris Hani's killing," Mr. Niehaus said.

Witnesses said those arrested included Gaye Derby-Lewis, Australian-born wife of prominent Conservative Party politician Clive Derby-Lewis, who was himself detained last Saturday in connection with the April 10 Hani murder.

Newspaper sources said right-wing journalist Arthur Kemp, author of a book on the neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB), was among those detained by police.

Polish immigrant Janusz Walus, pictured at the weekend holding a copy of Mr. Kemp's book Victory or Violence, was arrested immediately after Mr. Hani's murder and is accused of his assassination. He is due to appear in court again on May 12.

Kevin Ryan, who is staying at the Derby-Lewis home in Krugersdorp near Johannesburg, said three policemen and a

policewoman arrived at 4 a.m. and spent about 45 minutes at the house before taking Gaye Derby-Lewis away, he said.

Police spokesman Brigadier Frans Malherbe told Reuters five people, four from Krugersdorp and one from Benoni, were arrested early Wednesday in connection with investigations into the murder of Mr. Hani, a former guerrilla leader and general secretary of the South African Communist Party.

Mr. Malherbe did not name those detained.

Conservative Party spokesman Ferdi Hartzenberg said he needed more information before he could comment.

The ANC and its allies have delayed until May 12 the start of a nationwide civil disobedience campaign to press demands for an early date for all-race elections to put an end to white rule.

COLUMN 100000

Mount Everest is still the greatest

GENEVA (AFP) — Mount Everest, the world's tallest peak, is being cut down to size, victim of the Earth's shaking crust and more precise measuring instruments, a French-Italian mountain climbing team said Tuesday. Mount Everest, in the Himalayas on the boundary between Nepal and Tibet, remains the world's highest mountain, measuring 8,846.1 metres (29,029 feet). However in a startling come-down it has been found to have shrunk 2.03 metres compared with the last time it was measured by the Chinese in 1974-75. Named after the British Colonel George Everest, the mountain, measured 8,852 metres when the rule was first run over it officially in 1950. "These changes are explained by the movement in the Earth's crust in this region and by calculating methods that are much more precise," said Benoit Chamoux, 31, a French mountain climber who scaled Everest on Sept. 29, 1992 burdened with 15 kilos of scientific equipment.

Yeltsin urges Muscovites to multiply

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin told workers at a Moscow factory to have more children because life in Russia was going to get better. ITAR-TASS News Agency quoted Mr. Yeltsin as urging young employees to "be bolder about having children" when he attended the opening of a food factory. "Reform has started, life will get better," the Kremlin leader said. Mr. Yeltsin, campaigning for a referendum Sunday that could determine his political fate, was greeted at the plant with slogans reading "we support the policy of the president" and "yes to reforms." Mr. Yeltsin has actively courted the support of social groups ranging from Siberian miners to World War II veterans in the run-up to the poll, which includes questions on confidence in himself and his tough reform policies. TASS said he told the factory workers he had signed a decree Tuesday on "helping women and children" which would increase child allowances. Falling birth rates among ethnic Russians have preoccupied Kremlin leaders for decades.

Russian brides fetch twice as much as Koreans in Japan

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese arranged marriages with Russian brides cost twice as much as those with Koreans but only 20 per cent more than those with Chinese women who are growing in popularity, a marriage broker said Wednesday. A spokesman for International Bridal Association (IBA), a Tokyo-based agency which seeks foreign women for Japanese bachelors, said the average cost of arranging a marriage with a Russian was three million yen (27,300 dollars). That compares with about 1.5 million yen for Korean brides and 2.5 million yen for Chinese partners, who have become increasingly popular here in the past two years amid had publicity about arranged marriages with Filipina brides. The spokesman said Russian marriages commanded a premium due to the "risks" associated with doing business in the former Soviet Union, notably in such lawless places as Vladivostok, the nearest major Russian city to Japan. Marriages with women from the Philippines, the traditional hunting ground for mail-order brides, cost about two million yen to arrange.

Indian film star remanded in custody

BOMBAY (R) — Police said that film star Sanjay Dutt had been remanded in custody until May 2 following his arrest in the wake of last month's bomb blasts in Bombay which killed 251 people. Bombay's police chief Amarjeet Singh Samra said that 33-year-old Dutt had been charged with unlawful possession of an AK-56 rifle. Mr. Samra said police had also arrested three people who tried to destroy evidence. Dutt, among the most sought-after actors in the Hindi film world, was arrested Monday, hours after he arrived from shooting a film in Mauritius. Mr. Samra said an unlicensed 9 mm pistol of Belgian-make owned by Dutt had also been found. He said Dutt's argument was that the weapons would not stand up because the actor already owned three licensed guns. Mr. Samra said the police were checking whether there were links between Dutt and the conspiracy behind the series of bombings which tore through India's commercial capital, killing 250 people and injuring 1,400.